

# Universidad de Cuenca



**Facultad de Filosofía, Letras y Ciencias de la Educación**

**Maestría en Lengua Inglesa y Lingüística Aplicada**

**"READING STRATEGIES FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES DESIGNED TO  
DEVELOP THE READING AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN THE PRE-  
INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH CLASSES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF AZUAY."**

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## RESUMEN

El presente estudio investiga las estrategias de lectura para el aprendizaje del idioma inglés con propósitos específicos y tiene como objetivo principal diseñar un folleto con actividades para desarrollar habilidades de lectura y pensamiento crítico en el nivel pre-intermedio de enseñanza del idioma inglés de la Universidad del Azuay, ubicada en la ciudad de Cuenca, provincia del Azuay, durante el año lectivo 2013-2014.

La investigación aplica el método descriptivo para explicar los diferentes aspectos que facilitan la obtención y entendimiento de los datos y características en torno a la manera en que se da el proceso de aprendizaje del idioma inglés, además de obtener un punto de vista de la situación real. Los participantes de la investigación son los veinte y siete estudiantes de la carrera de Psicología de la Universidad del Azuay que cursan el nivel pre-intermedio de inglés. Para realizar el análisis se ha utilizado principalmente tres instrumentos: una encuesta para conocer sus comentarios sobre la enseñanza de esta segunda lengua; un examen previo para conocer el nivel de aprendizaje que los estudiantes han logrado hasta el momento; y un examen posterior a la aplicación del folleto para revisar si su nivel de aprendizaje se ha elevado o no, en relación a su nivel inicial.

La conclusión general es que, luego de que la docente ha usado el nuevo folleto en las clases, los estudiantes han incrementado su nivel de comprensión de las lecturas revisadas que, además, fueron diseñadas específicamente para la carrera de Psicología.

**Palabras clave:** idioma inglés, folleto, lectura comprensiva, pensamiento crítico.



## ABSTRACT

This is a study of reading strategies for specific purposes and its goal is to design a booklet to develop the Reading and Critical Thinking Skills in the Pre-Intermediate English classes at the University of Azuay, located in Cuenca, Azuay, during the 2014 school year. The main purpose of the research is to design a booklet containing a series of activities and classroom exercises related to the identification of word meaning in different contexts and the retention of vocabulary to help students develop strategies for reading comprehension and critical reading skills in the pre-intermediate English classes at the School of Psychology at the University of Azuay.

The research applied The Descriptive Method to explain features that facilitate the gathering of data and knowledge of the English language learning process, so that we can have an overview of the current situation of English language teaching. The participants are twenty-seven pre –intermediate level students of the school of Psychology of University of Azuay. Three research tools were used to collect information: a questionnaire for finding out their comments about their experiences in learning English at the school of Psychology, a pre test to determine the students' level at the moment the research started, and a post test after our booklet was used in order to find out whether the students had made some progress.

The main conclusion is that, after using the new booklet in class students increased their level of reading comprehension, considering the fact that activities of the booklet were specially designed for students of the school of Psychology.

**Key words:** English language, English language booklet, reading comprehension, critical thinking.



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## **DEDICATION**

To God and my parents: Thanks for all their love and continuous care.

To my daughters: Isabel and Maria Mercedes; You have been my inspiration; thanks for your great understanding to those long working hours.



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## CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

*Reading Strategies for Specific Purposes Designed to Develop Reading and Critical Thinking Skills in the Pre-Intermediate English Classes at the University of Azuay* is a research work which was carried out with pre-intermediate students of the Language Department of the University of Azuay. The idea was to identify the problems students face when dealing with reading comprehension and design a series of strategies and activities to help them be more confident and competent readers. A booklet including the strategies and activities mentioned above are the result and contribution of this research.

Developing reading comprehension requires much more understanding and focus than just memorizing terms. Keeping in mind that there is more to developing vocabulary and language comprehension than learning new words (Ming-Ju & Hsin-Yi 5), most students are not usually motivated when reading material that is not related to their needs or degree course; consequently, their development of reading comprehension and critical thinking will not occur to the expected degree. If the opposite happens, that is, if students are motivated, the university's goal will be fulfilled and its students will be proficient in reading comprehension. In this sense, if adequate strategies are correctly planned and applied in a reading comprehension class, students will increase their ability to understand written material, retain vocabulary, and think in a critically way.

This research shows a proposal on how to improve the teaching of reading comprehension and the development of the students' ability to read critically at the University of Azuay by designing a series of strategies and activities. It also needs to be mentioned that the Language Department of the University of Azuay is working on finding useful and appropriate teaching material to fulfill the university's requirements and has asked teachers to do some research on this issue.

In this study, the Descriptive Method was applied to explain features that facilitate data and knowledge about the English language learning process, so that we can have an overview of the current situation. The participants are twenty-seven students of the school of Psychology of The University of Azuay; they are students of pre-intermediate level of English. Three research tools



were used: a questionnaire for students of Psychology that aimed at finding out their learning experience in their degree course; a pre-test administered to students prior to the elaboration of the booklet; and a post-test which was administered to students after using the new booklet.

### **1.1. Statement of the problem**

Reading in English is taught at the School of Psychology as a core subject. Up to now, it has been taught by means of a methodology that uses readings that deal with general topics. These readings include updated material; however, they do not motivate students' interest because they are not related to their degree course. Therefore, there is a need to change the way English Reading comprehension has been taught, by using Psychology-related reading material, including content-based readings that develop critical thinking skills.

With this in mind, the foreign-language teachers at the University of Azuay are permanently seeking for the best ways to help their students become proficient in understanding the language they are learning. In this specific case, focus is placed on reading comprehension and very little attention is paid on the other language skills. In this sense, the aim of learning English is different from what normally occurs in the rest of higher education institutions of Ecuador. This demands a careful planning of certain strategies and classroom activities that may lead students to the fulfillment of this goal. This research proposes to help students improve not only their reading comprehension ability but also the development of their ability to read critically.

The percentage of Psychology students who have difficulty passing their reading comprehension classes is relatively high and one of the areas they find more complicated to deal with is the retention of vocabulary; therefore, they fail to understand the meaning of the material they are asked to read.



## 1.2. Background and justification

According to the new national requirements, if students want to graduate from a career, they need to pass an exam or to demonstrate B2 proficiency in a foreign language. Most students choose English because it is a language used world-wide and obligatory in many international universities. Besides, most scholarships include English as a requisite. Students from the University of Azuay also need to.

Students from the School of Psychology of the University of Azuay need to demonstrate their capacity to understand texts written in English at a B1 level. It is also important for them to become proficient in English since most of students must continue their studies in Master's Programs abroad and one of the main requirements is the domain of English. Helping students be competent in reading comprehension and critical thinking will lead the University of Azuay to characterize English programs that emphasize on students' needs and interests in a successful way. The creation of original material is one of the assets of this research and no doubt that it is going to strengthen the English curriculum development in the University of Azuay.

An important aspect that will be dealt with in this work is the development of the students' capacity to read critically. That means we teachers should try to make our students into active learners of the process. Developing the critical thinking skill may be done simultaneously with the development of reading comprehension. In fact, these two tasks complement each other. There are many ways we can do it. As Gocsik states, "...presenting our students with challenging reading materials and engaging them in interesting class discussions. As students read more and talk more, they will gain knowledge and discover new contexts for their ideas. They will also (we hope) come to think more critically" (Gocsik 2). Gocsik also presents a series of elements of critical thinking that university teachers may employ in their classrooms. She says that "...critical thinking pedagogy breaks down a student's existing critical thinking into discrete activities, and then shows students how to reflect carefully on each of these activities in order to sharpen their thinking skills" (Gocsik 3). She mentions the following elements of critical thinking: observations, facts,



inferences, assumptions, opinions, arguments, and critical analysis. This is not a linear process and “as we go about establishing our opinions and crafting our arguments, we return to our observations and facts, drawing new inferences and forming new assumptions that, in turn, affect the arguments that we are trying to make” (Gocsik 4).

If we consider the ideas expressed above, I believe that doing some research and making a proposal on how to improve the teaching of reading comprehension and the development of the students' ability to read critically at the University of Azuay by designing a series of strategies and activities is totally justified. It also needs to be mentioned that the Language Department of the University of Azuay is working on the finding of useful and appropriate teaching material to fulfill the university's requirements, and has asked teachers to do some research on this issue. What is proposed here then is not a new methodology, but a specific way to help students develop their reading skills and critical thinking in the area of Psychology in order to retain as much contextualized vocabulary as possible through intense reading practice techniques. An adequate selection of texts to design a booklet would be an approach that would help to reach the proposed objectives.

### **1.3. Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of the research is to design a booklet containing a series of activities and classroom exercises related to the identification of word meaning in different contexts and the retention of vocabulary to help students develop strategies for reading comprehension and critical reading skills in the pre-intermediate English classes at the School of Psychology of the University of Azuay.

#### **Aim:**

To make and use a booklet to help students develop strategies for reading comprehension for specific purposes and critical reading skills in the pre-intermediate English classes at the School of Psychology of the University of Azuay.

**Objectives:**

- To help students develop reading strategies through specific topics related to psychology;
- To help students develop critical thinking skills;
- To design a booklet containing a series of activities and classroom exercises to promote the identification of word meaning in different contexts and the retention of vocabulary;
- To apply the activities designed to develop reading and critical thinking skills in the pre-intermediate level.

**1.4. Research question**

Developing reading comprehension requires much more understanding and focus than just memorizing terms. Keeping in mind that there is more to developing vocabulary and language comprehension than learning new words, most students are not usually motivated when reading material that is not related to their needs or degree course; consequently, their development of reading comprehension and critical thinking will not occur in the expected degree. If the opposite happens, that is, if students are motivated, the university's goal will be fulfilled and its students will be proficient in reading comprehension. This leads to my research question, "If adequate strategies are correctly planned and applied in a reading comprehension class, are students going to increase their ability to understand written material, retain vocabulary, and think critically?"

**1.5. Limitations**

Two kinds of limitations were identified in this study:

1. The research would have had more consistent information with a larger sample. However, the University of Azuay has some regulations about its programs and it is necessary to observe them, this being the reason that exploratory researches with several groups cannot be carried out.
2. It is not possible to make a generalization of the study since the group studied belongs to the School of Psychology of the University of Azuay;





it unique and different from other students of English at the same University or other institutions of Ecuador.

## **1.6. Overview of forthcoming chapters**

The structure of this research is presented in five main Chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Analysis and Interpretation of Results, a Reading Comprehension Strategies Booklet. The last part of this work contains the conclusions and recommendations. I have been able to suggest.

The Introduction contains the statement of the problem, the background and justification, the purpose of the study, the research question, and an overview of the chapters of this work. In Chapter 2 includes the conceptual framework and a review of the literature consulted. In Chapter 3 describes the methodology, which deals with the techniques, instruments, and forms of interpretation of the information collected. Chapter 4 is the core of the research and it is an analysis of the data collected. The last par is the booklet that contains the treatment applied. Finally, the conclusions and recommendations show the findings of the study.



## CHAPTER II - LITERATURE REVIEW

English for Specific Purposes refers to teaching a specific genre of English for students with specific goals and there are different ways to define this, however most of them are really similar. One of these definitions states that:

*The term 'specific' in ESP refers to the specific purpose for learning English through a field that is already known and relevant to them. This means that they are able to use what they learn in the ESP classroom right away in their work and studies. The ESP approach enhances the relevance of what the students are learning and enables them to use the English they know to learn even more English, since their interest in their field will motivate them to interact with speakers and texts. (Fiorito 1)*

Moreover, (Stevens 4) makes a distinction between four absolute characteristics and two variable characteristics which are worthy transcribing.

The absolute characteristics are that ESP consists of English Language Teaching, which is:

- designed to meet specified needs of the learner;
- related in content (that is in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations and activities;
- centered on language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics and an analysis of the discourse;
- in contrast with 'General English'.

The variable characteristics are that ESP:

- may be restricted as to the learning skills to be learned (for example, reading only);
- may not be taught according to any pre-ordained methodology (Stevens 5)

According to this, teaching English demands the analysis of the students' situation and their needs so as to apply a specific method,



considering effective learning requires satisfying individual expectations of the students, so that they can apply what they learn in real life, in their future profession.

In contrast, Dudley-Evans say that the absolute characteristics of English for Specific Purposes are:

- ESP is designed to meet the specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves;
- ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis, register) skills discourse and genres appropriate to these activities (Dudley-Evans 4).

In this study, it is more appropriate to work with Stevens since the variable characteristics we have referred to above make the ESP approach wider. Moreover, Stevens and Dudley-Evans also say that ESP emphasizes on the central importance of the learners and their attitudes to learning. Learners were seen to have different needs and interests, which would have an important influence on their motivation to learn and, therefore, on the effectiveness of their learning (7). This has supported the development of courses in which “relevance” to the learners’ needs and interests was paramount. The standard way of achieving this was to take texts from the learners’ specialized area; for example, texts about Biology for Biology students, and so on. The assumption underlying this approach was that the clear relevance of an English course that fulfills the students’ needs would improve the learners’ motivation and thereby make learning better and faster.

There are clear advantages in setting up an ESP course where students have specific needs. Dudley-Evans summarize the advantages of ESP in these four aspects:

- Being focused on the learner’s need, it wastes no time;
- It is relevant to the learner;
- It is successful in imparting learning;



- It is more cost-effective than 'general English', due to the fact that its aims are widely accepted by students.

The implication of this is that ESP teaching is more motivating for learners than general English because many students need some material and advice that will help them develop particular skills that are related to their course.

Learners come to the ESP class with a specific interest in learning and they learn languages when they have opportunities to understand and work with the target language in a context that they comprehend and find interesting. In this view, ESP is a powerful means for such opportunities. Students will acquire English as they work with material which they find interesting and relevant and can use in their professional work or further studies. The more learners pay attention to the meaning of the language they hear or read, the more they seem to be successful; the more they have to focus on the linguistic input or isolated language structures, the less they seem to be motivated to attend their classes.

ESP is particularly well disposed to focus on meaning in the subject-matter field. In ESP, English should be presented not as a subject to be learned in isolation from real use, nor as a mechanical skill or habit to be developed. On the contrary, English should be presented in authentic contexts to make the learners acquainted with the particular ways in which the language is used in functions that they will need to perform in their fields of expertise or job. (Fiorito 1)

Educational processes have to be studied before they start because it is important for teachers to make an intense analysis of the students' situation groups (careers, professions, English level, culture, social context, etc.), course programs (modules, syllabuses), institution's mission and vision, etc. Educators need to use all the necessary strategies and techniques to get the most appropriate information. It means teachers need to identify the right actions to start a learning process in order to achieve the best results at the end of it. Consequently, teachers will make appropriate and upcoming actions at the beginning, during the course, and at the end of it.



The necessity to improve English after high school and university is an immediate requirement for workers, professionals, and students of Master's Programs. "...all this development was to exert pressure on the language teaching profession to deliver the required goods. Whereas English has previously decided its own destiny, it now became subject to the wishes, needs, and demands of people..." (Hutchinson & Waters, 1991). The different people's necessities and interests, the permanent changes of the English language, and the demands of the new world generate the obligation of using English for specific purposes or specific language needs.

Another important fact is that teachers have to recognize students as a group having common necessities, interests, expectations, and needs that need to be satisfied appropriately. "Educators can improve the learning experience of every student when they develop and implement a plan for a shared commitment to high academic goals for their students and engage in collaborative problem (...)" (Government of Canada, 2011). To sum up, educators must diagnose the whole students' genre or group, and prepare active and innovated methodology aimed at making students aware of the need for working as a team during the ESP course or module.

Also, teachers will have to set up the students' previous knowledge, their strengths, and weaknesses by using a "Needs Assessment", which will help teachers be able to examine their students individually to distinguish their skills and capacities to adapt accurate strategies in the ESP course curriculum. This information will also be fruitful and will help teachers choose appropriate topics and activities to organize group work, pair work, etc.

Many universities, and educational institutions faced the necessity to help students of a Master's degrees, professionals, and workers of different areas to design, prepare, and implement ESP courses, modules, or programs. "Advances in medical technology have increased the human life span and, as elderly populations increase, so will jobs in healthcare. Unable to find a book specifically targeting American English for nursing, this need has been met by designing material for nurses and language instructors." (Medlin, 2009). Some



of these programs have been worked successfully and some have not fulfilled didn't cover the expectations of their participants.

An ESP program presented by Laura Medlin, a Master of Arts in Teaching International Languages California State University, Chico, in 2009 for Nursing in a U.S. hospital had an enormous success for a lot reasons. "Nursing personnel are required to converse with many different types of people on a variety of topics. They function as liaisons between patients, physicians, family members, and other staff. Nurses must remember medical information and organize work to fit within time constraints while multi-tasking" (Medlin, 2009).

Professors need to investigate their students' atmosphere and find out to notice how they live, how they think, what they do, where they work, etc, while keeping the necessary respect for their intimacy and in a friendly way guide them to learn a language for a specific purpose. "... If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent discourse community" (Swales, 1990). In addition, teachers' plans have to incorporate some information which was obtained after the application of a Needs Analysis. As a conclusion, students will be open to study and accept the importance to learn a language for specific needs because they are not alone in the learning process. They are members of a community (Doctors, Engineers, Teachers, Nurses, Lawyers, etc.).

The success of an ESP course will also depend a lot on the teachers' ability to obtain the precise information with the strategies of the "Needs Assessment" and make an appropriate syllabus for a course, letting teachers start a learning process with all the utensils to achieve the goals and objectives successfully during and at the end of the educational program.

On the other hand, it is necessary that Professors develop activities that will give the ESP students a natural environment and make them feel they are experiencing real-life situations. "The medical documents alone are vast and worthy of study. Physicians' interactions with patients, such as the doctor-patient interview, comprise a large portion of the discourse. The business and management of healthcare, finances, insurance, legalities and all the



associated economic implications are current topics of interest” (Medlin, 2009). A meaningful learning in Nursing in the U.S. hospital process depends on having a clear purpose to learn ESP and teachers must identify what the students’ real objectives are and help them improve their language proficiency by dealing with pertinent contents and useful didactic material to cover students’ interests. “Although they may say they just want to learn English, they frequently have very specific learning goals and needs (...)” (CAL, 2011). The goals and students’ needs will depend most of the time on their genre and work fields. Some students want to learn an ESP language to communicate with other people, colleagues, to study in a foreign country, other group of students wants to get a good job or study a Master’s in their work field (Health care, for example).

The project (Nursing in a U.S. hospital) has proved to be a tremendous responsibility. A greater respect has been gained for the complexities inherent in the task of curriculum development. It is difficult to organize all the material and make decisions as to what is essential, and what can be excluded (Medlin, 2009). The organization of appropriate material is an important tool for teachers because it will allow them to organize an English program and make teachers and students work in a real classroom atmosphere. “The process can influence student placement, materials selection, curriculum design, and instructional practice” (Casper, 2003). With the information teachers obtain from different sources, educators can place students in a correct English level. English materials will be selected to fulfill the students’ necessities and the class methodology has to adequate as to make students get involved and active in the didactic process.

Another meaningful aspect that makes Nursing in a U.S. hospital productive for nurses was the analysis of the different intelligences a person has. “When a topic is chosen for a lesson, look at it from all eight perspectives, and attempt to incorporate an instructional method that would appeal to several, if not all, of the intelligences in order to give all learners an equal opportunity to access the material.” (Medlin, 2009). Varied activities will give students the opportunity to learn and to demonstrate their learning by doing different tasks. Some topics



will be based on narration to appeal to the verbal/linguistic capacity, an aesthetic exercise for the visual/spatial intelligence.

The “Needs Analysis” project (Nursing in a hospital) also aims at using correct vocabulary, appropriate phrases, useful questions where nurses, patients, doctors and more members of the medical system talk the same language in their daily work. “This section contains examples of language used during patient care, and daily routines, such as bathing and eating. All nursing personnel participate in all aspects of patient care, and that care is accompanied by conversation.” (Medlin, 2009). Professors should include colloquial and slang terms, pain assessment scales and descriptions, and ways patients may describe their symptoms because they are part of a language in a medical house too. “The nursing process is a deliberate, problem-solving approach to meeting the health care and nursing needs of patients. It involves assessment (data collection), nursing diagnosis, planning, implementation, and evaluation, with subsequent modifications used as feedback mechanisms that promote the resolution of the nursing diagnoses” (Gatehouse, 2003).

In didactic processes, even in ESP programs, evaluation has to be constant because evaluation is not a simple perception. Evaluation is an important instrument of the teaching-learning process to make teachers realize if objectives of the class planning have been reached during the program. “Needs assessment” may take many forms and may be carried out at different times during the instructional process. In the same way, “Needs assessment” is an important instrument in the ESP course processes for improving the plans and requirements, as it is observed we can see in this Nursing program.

Laura Medlin also uses a questionnaire in her strategies. “The reader questionnaire has been developed to elicit feedback from students, language instructors, nursing instructors, or other members of the healthcare or educational teams. This input will be used to improve and expand upon the handbook”. “Needs Analysis” is covered in a systemic way without any detail left for that reason, the result of this ESP program were successful and useful for other nursing modules. This program is also used as the basis for other ESP courses.





On the other hand, there are ESP programs projects, or pilot ESP program projects which were not successful because they faced several difficulties during their planning process, ( English for Specific Academic Purposes: *A pilot tutoring project with undergraduate ESL Students in a Sociology Course*), by Christine Sager, is a good example to aniline the difficulties an ESP program can have. First, “Their experience with authentic lecture discourse, different genres of academic writing, extensive reading and synthesizing, and most fundamentally, analytical processing of subject-specific information is limited” (Sager, 2011). In order to make an ESP program, a teacher confronts one of the hardest problems, which is the recollection of the right and enough material to prepare a curriculum. The problem is even bigger if the material is too limited or extensive.

The lack of the right material will also influence on the construction of the objectives of an ESP program, which is not going to have a straight road for getting it goals. So, at the end of the program, students will not be satisfied with the course (*A pilot Tutoring Project with Undergraduate ESL Students in a Sociology Course*). “The designing process involves examining the role of objectives for the tutees, familiarizing oneself with the content course, analyzing the students’ needs, and assisting them in developing the relevant skills” (Sager, 2011). In other words, the goals of the program won’t be connected with the contents, and the contents will not satisfy the students’ interests and necessities.

Another problem of this pilot tutoring program is that there were students from different countries who had different study habits came from different cultures, social contexts, etc. “...the foreign students are socialized differently toward learning in their home cultures and acquire other study skills or learning styles, which correspond to the methodologies and belief systems in practice in their native countries” (Sager, 2011). To sum up, it is very hard to make students work in their tasks together as one solid group because their differences and the limited knowledge of English they have will lead them to face problems in the understanding of the course material and the results will end up in frustration and low grades.



The program we have referred to above has shown another important problem, which is the students' different view. "The professor estimated that the student body of his Sociology course (Views from the Third World) was composed of 50 to 60 percent non-native speakers of English. In his opinion, the greatest difficulties facing the students are: adjusting to American-style education practices, analyzing (versus rote learning) a variety of sources and synthesizing information using critical thinking skills" (Sager, 2011). The material for students who are not immersed in a certain educational process may be confusing, so students will have long discussions with American students. The ESP class will not have a real purpose, a global interest, and it will not guide the students' criteria.

The program we are talking about was not a very successful because it did not follow a systematic "Needs Analysis" process; for that reason, it has so many insufficiencies, "To conclude, although the pilot tutoring project appears to have been somewhat successful, I believe that a closer look should be given to an adjunct course, adjunct course with a curriculum developed and adapted to the objectives of the content course" (Sager, 2011). We can notice that students were the most affected for this pilot program; the institution also wasted time and teachers got frustrated with the poor results of it.

It is not a simple procedure to create an ESP program because the results can be catastrophic not only for the students but also for all the members immersed in it. We teachers must remember that the success of a learning ESP program is in our hands. We have to be responsible and use the different steps the "Needs Analysis" provides us. It has to be our principal utensil to create a meaningful ESP program.

It is important to make it clear that this proposal, according to Feldman, is based on Cognitivism, which is:

*The Psychology of learning which emphasizes human cognition or intelligence as a special endowment enabling man to form hypotheses and develop intellectually. The underlying concepts of cognitivism involve how we think and gain knowledge. Cognitivism involves*



*examining learning, memory, problem-solving skills, and intelligence. Cognitive theorists may want to understand how problem-solving changes throughout childhood, how cultural differences affect the way we view our own academic achievements, language development, and much more. (Feldman 65)*

Therefore, Cognitivism places emphasis on the role of the teacher in terms of the instructor's effectiveness to present instructional material in a manner that facilitates the students' learning; that is, helping students to review and connect previous learning on a topic before moving onto new ideas about that topic, thus helping students understand the material by organizing it effectively, understanding differences in students' learning styles.

In this respect, Gagne's Cognitive-Behavioral Theory explains that there are many different types or levels of learning, and instruction should vary according to the learner's level (Gory 540). More specifically, Gagne identified five categories of learning: verbal information, intellectual skills, cognitive strategy, attitude, and motor skills. Gagne, Briggs, and Wagner (1992) explain that each of the above categories lead to a different type of human performance. Gagne talks about certain conditions of learning and he breaks them down into internal and external conditions. The internal conditions deal with previously learned capabilities of the learner or, in other words, what the learner knows prior to the instruction. The external conditions have to do with the stimuli that are presented externally to the learner, like for example the instructions which are provided to the learner.

Corry, who makes reference to Gagne's Theory of Instruction, argues that:

*The way Gagne's theory is put into practice is as follows. First of all, the instructor determines the objectives of the instruction. These objectives must then be categorized into one of the five domains of learning outcomes (verbal information, intellectual skills, motor skills, attitude, and cognitive strategy). Each of the objectives must be stated in performance terms using one of the standard verbs (i.e. states, discriminates, classifies, etc.) associated with the particular*



*learning outcome. The instructor then uses the conditions of learning for the particular learning outcome to determine the conditions necessary for learning. And finally, the events of instruction necessary to promote the internal process of learning are chosen and put into the lesson plan. The events in essence become the framework for the lesson plan or steps of instruction. (Corry 540)*

The role of the teacher is evident in Gagne's instructional events: (1) gaining the attention of learners, (2) informing learners of the objective of learning, (3) stimulating recall of prior learning, (4) presenting the stimulus, (5) providing learning guidance, (6) eliciting performance, (7) providing feedback on performance, (8) assessing performance, (9) enhancing retention and transfer. Gagne's Nine Instructional Events culminate in their application in the classroom or in training to create efficiency. (PB Works 1)

A teacher that already has experience in teaching English as a foreign/second language can exploit student's background in language teaching. In this sense, he/she should recognize the ways in which teaching skills can be adapted to the teaching of English for Specific Purposes, so maybe he/she will look for content specialists for help in designing appropriate lessons in the subject matter field he/she is teaching.

With regards to that, Fiorito says that "as an ESP teacher, you must play roles. You may be asked to organize courses, to set learning objectives, to establish a positive learning environment in the classroom, and to evaluate student's progress" (Fiorito 2)

Based on the considerations above, it is now appropriate to start talking about what the focus of this research work is –Reading Comprehension. Again, many linguists and theorists in the last two or three decades have tried to explain the best ways (methods) to teach Reading Comprehension to students of all ages and levels. In this respect, Alderson and Urquhart (1-27) state that in many parts of the world, reading knowledge of a foreign language is often important in academic studies, professional success, and personal



development. This is specifically true for English because a lot of professional, technical, and scientific literature is published in English today.

Emphasizing on the importance of reading, Farhady (37-48) argues that since the language of science and technology is often English, reading in English has received priority among other objectives of English language teaching. He reasons that the main goal of teaching English in many countries of the world, especially in educational institutions, is set to improve the reading ability of the students in order to enable them to extract incoming information from the English sources in their field of study. Carrel (1988) claims that reading is the main reason that makes foreign students be interested in learning English.

Along the same lines, Richards and Renandya (217) assume that there are several reasons that make reading receive a special focus in many second or foreign language situations. First, many foreign language students often have reading as one of their most important goals. They want to be able to read for information and pleasure, for their degree courses, and for their study purposes. Second, written texts serve various pedagogical purposes. Extensive exposure to linguistically comprehensible written texts can improve the process of language acquisition. Good reading texts also provide good models for writing and provide opportunities to study language (e.g. vocabulary, grammar, idioms, etc.). Reading, then, is a skill which is highly valued by students and teachers alike.

As it may be deduced from what has been summarized above, reading is also a crucial skill for students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). David Ausubel (547) mentions that learning which is not meaningful will not become permanent. Following this logic, reading is not just extracting meaning from a text, but a process of connecting information in the text with the knowledge the reader brings to the act of reading. Reading, in this sense, is a dialogue between the reader and the text. It is seen as an active cognitive process in which the reader's preexisting knowledge plays a key role in the creation of meaning. In this way, reading is not a passive mechanical activity, but a



purposeful and rational process, dependent on the prior knowledge and expectations of the reader or learner (Ausubel 547).

The use of meaningful material, in this case selected content-based material, allows students to confront, explore, and understand important and challenging concepts, topics, specific terms and issues which also allow the development of critical thinking. However, the reading material must be carefully chosen, based on the students' interests, degree course, and prior knowledge in order to find meaning in the reading and develop their criteria for understanding, judging, and defining their opinions. If the reading material that is presented by the teacher considers the above principles, students can better understand the coherence and logical information that is being presented. Also, well-organized reading material will help students locate the main ideas and distinguish them from less important information (Ausubel 580).

Reading should be an active task in which students give different interpretations that are going to enable them to interact with the text and among each other. If students are trained not to simply read and answer questions, fill-in blank spaces, check Yes or No, etc., but also to comment on the contents of the text and expose their ideas to their classmates, they will start to read more critically and, therefore, more meaningfully. The result of this will demonstrate an obvious and notorious increase in their reading comprehension ability. For this reason, it is important that teachers choose material or themes that are appropriate for the students' language level and that are interesting enough for them to produce this interaction and enter into a productive stage of their learning –critical thinking.

What is critical thinking? Most researchers coincide that it is the kind of thinking we use to analyze what we read, see, or hear in order to arrive at a justified conclusion or decision (Northedge 1). Critical thinking is a conscious process that, when effectively dealt with, always has an outcome. It can result in a conclusion, decision, opinion, or behavior. It can also result in a presentation. Critical thinking puts your mind to work on complex problems, from considering a degree course change or resolving family crisis, to making effective an effective classroom presentation or a politician's campaign speech.



According to Northedge, the key to critical thinking is to develop an impersonal approach which looks at arguments and facts and which lays aside personal views and feelings. This is because academic discourse is based on key principles, which are described below:

- Debate: arguing different points of view.
- Scholarship: awareness of what else has been written, and citing it correctly.
- Argument: developing points in a logical sequence which leads to a conclusion.
- Criticism: looking at strengths and weaknesses.
- Analysis: taking the argument apart, as described above.
- Evidence: ensuring that the argument is backed by valid evidence.
- Objectivity: the writing should be detached and unemotional and without direct appeal to the reader.
- Precision: anything that does not assist the argument should be omitted. (Northedge 1)

What does it take to read critically? Northedge continues to explain that for reading academic texts, you need to employ certain procedures:

1. Identify the argument – what is the author's main line of reasoning?

2. Analyze and criticize the argument:

- Are the reasons sufficient, and are they valid to the argument; in other words, do they support it or would it be possible to draw other conclusions from them?
- Does the author develop the argument in a logical and coherent fashion, i.e., premise/point A/point B/conclusion, avoiding confusing breaks in the logical flow?
- Is the author's logic always valid, or does he/she draw arguments from false premises, or are there flaws in the reasoning assuming a causal





connection where none is justifiable or generalizing from too few examples?

- Is the author's style objective, or does he/she use emotive language, designed to get the reader's sympathy; for example, words or phrases such as cruel, inhuman, Golden Age?

3. Assess the evidence (facts, observations, or experimentation)

4. What are the conclusions, and are they supported by evidence? It may be possible to present what appears to be flawless research, which may yet not justify the conclusions.

5. What are the alternatives? Look at the author's work from different perspectives - how does the view presented differ from others? (Northedge 1)

Northedge also states that much of learning is carried out by dialogue and by tossing ideas around, but it is not possible to expect to substantiate with the same degree of rigor as in writing (Northedge 2). However, the author also states that the learner must look for inconsistencies and contradictions, be as prepared to ask questions as he or she is to listen; for example, if someone offers a point of view about a particular author or text, he or she should not be afraid to challenge them to substantiate their claim. Critical reading involves reasoned argument, which will help develop learner's thinking skills, particularly as verbal debate proceeds at a more rapid pace than writing or reading, which are mostly solitary activities.

There are other theories about critical thinking. Benesch and some other ESL teachers have defined Critical Thinking as a democratic learning process that examines power relations and social inequities. In this sense, in a classroom that features critical thinking, the students are encouraged to participate actively talking about issues of concern in their daily lives: work, school, abortion, global warming, marriage, for instance. ESL teachers should encourage students to analyze their experience and their involvement with the culture, politics, and the history of the new language. (Benesch 575)





The important advantage of critical thinking is that it encourages active learning by teaching students how to think rather than what to think. In order to meet these expectations, students need to be trained in these skills to increase their chances of academic success. It is incorrect to assume that students will figure out how to do this on their own.

Guevara & Osorio (6) refer to critical thinking and its benefits. They say that it allows the reader to get answers to specific questions. These questions may come from our daily lives, which are experiences we need to explain ourselves. The reader finds the meaning of their origin and gets the possible answers to them. One more benefit from reading is that it facilitates the acquisition of new vocabulary and thoughts.

Guevara and Osorio (6) also refer to intensive reading, which is simply careful reading of shorter, more difficult foreign language texts with the goal of completing and detailing understanding. This type of reading involves learners reading in detail with specific learning aims and tasks; it also includes activities like skimming a text for specific information to answer true or false statements or filling gaps in a summary, scanning a text to match headings to paragraphs, and scanning jumbled paragraphs and then reading them carefully to put them into the correct order. Intensive reading is also associated with the teaching of reading in terms of its component skills. Texts are studied intensively in order to introduce and practice the reading skill, such as distinguishing the main idea of a text from the detail, finding pronoun referents, or guessing the meaning of unknown words. Intensive reading involves learners reading in detail with specific learning aims and tasks. For example, intensive reading activities include skimming a text for specific information to answer true or false statements or filling gaps in a summary. As well with intensive reading, scanning texts can be used to match headings to paragraphs, and scanning jumbled paragraphs to read them carefully by putting them into the correct order.

Extensive reading, on the other hand, is generally associated with reading large amounts of text with the aim of getting an overall understanding of the reading materials. Readers are more concerned with the meaning of the text



than with the meaning of individual words or sentences or the finding of specific information. Long and Richards identify extensive reading as "occurring when students read large amounts of high interest material, usually out of class, concentrating on meaning, "reading for gist", and skipping unknown word" (Long and Richards 216).

In contrast with intensive reading, extensive reading is generally done for the comprehension of main ideas, not for specific details. This type of reading is good for foreign language learning and gives special attention to vocabulary, so learners can find unknown words in specific contexts, which allow the learners to infer and thus learn those words' meanings.

Students at a university level need to have extensive reading as an important component of their academic curriculum as this promotes a superior comprehensive level. The way information is obtained when engaging in this reading method allows for a more critical mode of interacting with the reading materials. When implementing this method, information is processed by analyzing it, questioning, making inferences, and obtaining unique conclusions.

As Zaid Ali Alsagoff puts it, when one starts asking questions and seeking answers one is in fact thinking (Ali Alsagoff 6). When one reads material of personal interest and asks why it has been written in that form, one's brain is encouraged to look for the answers for your own interrogations. When thinking critically, one is using one's brain to make sense of one's own world. Students will be able to agree or disagree with the texts they have read in order to express their points of view. Subsequently, teachers will have more opportunities for group and class discussions, debates, forums, and interviews. What is more, these activities will be facilitated by the fact that students will most likely be more inclined to participate actively, since they are more prone to feel comfortable to express and criticize the situations they encounter while reading to contexts pertaining to their everyday lives (Ali Alsagoff 6). Moreover, students are less likely to feel the pressure of having to answer questions, since the latter will only be asked at the end of each section (Guevara and Osorio 6). To understand better the objectives of critical thinking, it is necessary to review some of its characteristics, such as cognitive learning.



Cognitive learning is based on how people think, how people process information to learn. In this sense, cognitive learning can be defined as the process by which we acquire different skills for knowledge.

This learning theory involves the processing of the information by the brain to be recalled later. The process includes: reasoning, abstract thinking, decision making, problem solving etc., in which one learns by watching, reading, or experiencing some stimuli. About this, Laureate Education notes:

*As information is acquired through one's senses, it is transferred to working short-term memory. If the information is rehearsed and practiced through elaboration, the information then moves to long-term memory. Once in long-term memory, information may be later retrieved through other connections. (Laureate Education 2).*

Another similar definition about the theory is given by Mae (1), with special attention to its effect in the permanence of the information in the brain along the time:

*Cognitive Learning Theory implies that the different processes concerning learning can be explained by analyzing the mental processes first. It posits that with effective cognitive processes, learning is easier and new information can be stored in the memory for a long time. (Mae 1)*

Therefore, the application of cognitive learning is an interesting and effective method in teaching English as a second language, because it is important that individuals be aware of what they have been learning and can retain this in their brain, so that they can communicate both at the beginning of their learning and after a few years.

Moreover, the processes of reasoning, abstract thinking, decision making, problem solving etc., provide teachers with a variety of alternatives which can organize the contents of the English class, using methods or more teaching resources covering every step of the process of cognitive learning. One of these resources is technology, which used to incorporate some strategies like cues,



crosswords, questioning, and advanced organizers, such as concept maps, summarizing, note taking, and virtual field trips. The use of technology improves learning due to the fact that it enables students to retrieve their stored information, linking it by memory aids. Another important of cognitive is that it defines five categories of the learning process, as Gagne's theory suggest:

Robert Gagné (1985) was an instructional psychologist who was interested in determining what knowledge and skills a person requires to learn and develop to be effective in a job. In this sense, his work focuses on intentional learning, which is the type of learning that occurs in schools or in specific training programs and which suggests that the different events in the environment influence the individual's learning process. About this, the article of ICELS notes:

*Gagné's theory (1985, p.15) identifies the general types of human capabilities that are learned. These capabilities are the behavioral changes (learning outcomes) in a learner that a learning theory must explain. Once the learning outcomes are identified, an analysis of the conditions that govern learning and remembering can occur. (ICELS 1)*

These conditions of learning draw upon general concepts from various learning theories in order to define what learning is. In this way, Gagné studied the observable changes in human behavior that confirm that learning has occurred, to finally ratify that in ordinary life and in school there are specific conditions in which learning occurs with effective results.

The four elements of Gagné's conditions of learning are comprehensive and do not follow any specific order. It means that any learned capability will have the characteristics of one or another of these categories. These categories are the following:

- Conditions of Learning
- Association Learning
- The Five Categories of Learning Outcomes
- The Nine Events of Instruction



As can be seen, one of the elements is distinguishing the types of outcomes that learning has, the categories of learned capabilities that have common characteristics. In this point, Gagné describes five categories of human performance established by learning:

- Intellectual skills (“knowing how” or having procedural knowledge)
  - Verbal information (being able to state ideas, “knowing that”, or having declarative knowledge)
  - Cognitive strategies (having certain techniques of thinking, ways of analyzing problems, and having approaches to solving problems)
  - Motor skills (executing movements in a number of organized motor acts, such as playing sports or driving a car)
  - Attitudes (mental states that influence the choices of personal actions)
- (Mae 1)

In context, a learner who is participating in a situation where the right conditions for learning are invoked will then experience the five categories of learning outcomes. In turn, the five categories of learning outcomes provide the foundation for describing how the conditions of learning apply to each category.

**Intellectual Skills:** Intellectual skills involve the use of symbols such as numbers and language to interact with the environment. They involve knowing how to do something rather than knowing about something. Intellectual skills require an ability to carry out actions. Often they require the interactions with the environment through symbols, such as letters, numbers, words, or diagrams. When a learner has learned an intellectual skill, he or she will be able to demonstrate its application to at least one particular instance of the subject matter learned. This is divided into sub-categories: discriminations, concrete concepts, defined concepts, rules, higher-order rules. (ICELS 1)

**Verbal Information:** It refers to the organized bodies of knowledge that we acquire. They may be classified as names, facts, principles, and generalizations. Verbal information is referred to as declarative knowledge or knowing. The performance or learning outcome achieved through verbal information is the ability of being able to state in a meaningful sentence what



was learned. Some examples of acquired verbal information are the ability to define Piaget's stages of cognitive development or stating the rules for scoring in a tennis match. (ICELS 1)

**Motor Skills:** Motor skills are the precise, smooth, and accurately timed execution of movements involving the use of muscles. They are a distinct type of learning outcome and necessary to the understanding of the range of possible human performance. Learning situations that involve motor skills are learning to write, playing a musical instrument, playing sports, and driving a car. The timing and smoothness of executing motor skills indicate that these performances have a high degree of internal organization. (ICELS 1)

**Attitudes:** Another distinct category of learning outcomes is attitudes, the internal state that influences the choices of personal actions made by an individual towards some class of things, persons, or events. Choices of action (behaviors) made by individuals are influenced significantly by attitudes. For example, an attitude towards the disposal of trash will influence on how a person disposes of pop cans, food containers, organics, etc. (ICELS 1)

**Cognitive Strategies:** Cognitive strategies refer to the process that learners follow to guide their learning, remembering, and thinking. Where intellectual skills are oriented toward aspects of the environment by dealing with numbers, words, and symbols that are external, cognitive strategies govern our processes of dealing with the environment by influencing internal processes. A learner uses cognitive strategies in thinking about what was learned and in solving problems. They are the ways a learner manages the processes of learning, remembering, and thinking. (ICELS 1)

After having already checked the conditions of learning, this research focuses on the last category of the learning process: cognitive strategies. Considering that this category is also based on the cognitive learning theory, in which learning results from internal mental activity where the learner is an active participant in the learning process to construct his/her personal understanding and get knowledge, skills and related experiences to the learning situation need



to be pay attention to. In this case, when discussing, two specific cognitive learning strategies have to be included in the booklet: Analytical reading and critical reading.

**Analytical Reading:** Analytical reading is a style of reading that helps to understand the author's meaning. It may also involve techniques to improve the reader's ability to read aloud. According to Charles Darwin University (2), the style is based upon logical principles of observing how writers use phrases and emphasis to communicate their meaning through an active and systematic multi-step process based on two approaches to understanding what you read: the SQ3R technique and thinking through reading.

## 1. The SQ3R Technique

### **S = Survey**

- Glance through the whole chapter, section, or article
- Read the introduction
- Read the headings and subheadings (How is the text organized?)
- Skim for key questions, key information

### **Q= Question**

For each section, ask:

- What is the main point?
- What evidence is there to support that point?
- What examples explain the main point?

### **3R = Read, Recite and Review**

#### **R1: Read**

Begin to read the material section by section. Actively search for the answer to the questions you have asked yourself. Make notes about important points.

Link the information with what you already know and use this to help evaluate the author's statements.



## R2: Recite

After reading each section, recall the important points – say these aloud and write them down in the margins of the text. Make your notes in short phrases rather than full sentences. You may also highlight key information.

## R3: Review

Look back over the whole chapter or article at the way the information fitted together and how it addressed each of your questions. Think about what you have understood from the reading. Summarize the main ideas of the text in writing. Rewrite the notes you have taken (or paraphrase underlined sections) for easy review/reference later.

## 2. Thinking through reading

This technique involves enhancing your understanding of what you read by recognizing the level of information that it contains. This involves three levels of recognition:

**What does the writer say ?:** This is literal recognition. It is concerned with the surface information conveyed by the writer's words.

**What does the writer mean? :** This is interpretive recognition. We infer meaning from what the writer says. This is what is usually meant when we talk about reading between the lines.

**How do I connect this with what I already know or need to know? :** This is connective recognition. We look for connections between the literal and interpretive meanings with what we already know or need to know. In this way, we can:

- Find new solutions for problems
- Reach a new understanding
- Change our point of view.





## Critical Reading:

Critical reading demands students to exercise his own judgment about what he has read. For this, the student has to evaluate the writer's argument or position, asking questions himself and finding the way to provide argument answers for those questions. It means having a critical thinking, not only to claim that some idea or argument is faulty, but also to present a reasoned argument that analyzes what we are reading and that shows the advance in our understanding. This reading strategy also requires approaching readings with an effective critical eye to evaluate what, how, and why we read.

Some common questions about what we are reading include:

- What is the evidence for this argument?
- Do I agree with it?
  - If so, what is my evidence for agreement?
  - If not, what is my evidence to counter the author's argument?
- What alternative perspectives are possible here? (Charles Darwin University 3)

Salisbury University (2011) describes seven critical reading strategies:

1. **Previewing:** Learning about a text before really reading it.
2. **Contextualizing:** Placing a text in its historical, biographical, and cultural contexts.
3. **Questioning to understand and remember:** Asking questions about the content.
4. **Reflecting on challenges to our beliefs and values:** Examining our personal responses.
5. **Outlining and summarizing:** Identifying the main ideas and restating them in our own words.
6. **Evaluating an argument:** Testing the logic of a text as well as its credibility and emotional impact.
7. **Comparing and contrasting related readings:** Exploring likenesses and differences between texts to understand them better. (Charles Darwin University 3)



To sum up, to read critically the student applies certain processes, models, questions, and theories that result in enhanced clarity and comprehension. Critical reading strategies intend teaching students how to present a reasoned argument that evaluates and analyzes what they have read. This conscious process pushes the student to arrive at a reasoned conclusion, decision, opinion, or behavior that develops different mind structures and gets deeper in the complexity of the text read by students. However, as in any process, there are steps and guidelines to exercise the abilities required and a student can get deeper in reading strategies such as contextualizing, summarizing, evaluating, argument, contrasting, among others.

Most of the strategies and the theories developed in this literature review were put into practice to elaborate the booklet that students from the experimental group used during the research. Gagné's theory was also important to select appropriate readings according to students' needs and the corresponding critical process. Therefore, intellectual skills, verbal information, cognitive strategies, motor skills, and attitudes were important to develop certain parts of the booklet, like for example reading exercises with psychological topics ("laughter" and "autism") and the improvement of reading skills through strategies like scanning and skimming.



## CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Basic Methodology

The research method applied was the Deductive Method and the result is a booklet which includes the ideas proposed. As an initial step, a pretest was administered to determine the students' previous reading skills and critical thinking ability. Both questionnaires and interviews to students were used to collect data when applying the content based material, which was later analyzed and tabulated to determine the difficulties students have to understand written material and to give critical opinions of the material they have read, as well as to look for possible solutions to help students overcome their limitations. After the "remedies" were applied, students were post-tested to check their progress. Of course, it was expected that the students' level of understanding and critical thinking capacity improve significantly.

The research carried out a quantitative methodology with a descriptive and exploratory focus and considered an experimental-quantitative-interpretative design to measure the development of reading comprehension skills of the students of Psychology at the University of Azuay through the use of an ESP program with reading strategies which has different texts and exercises related to psychology including of critical thinking activities. During four months, a group of 27 students used critical thinking techniques when reading texts are they were monitored by the teacher. It was thought that this kind of methodological design would provide a clear view of the advantages or errors of the treatment administered.



### **3.2. Research techniques**

#### **Bibliographic and Internet Research**

Review the biographical references and internet sources allowed the search, selection and study of the most relevant theoretical contributions about ESP, ESL, Critical Thinking, and Cognitive Learning. This information was useful for the analysis of the results of further investigation.

#### **Field Research:**

This is a primary technique because the research requires work in the place where the event occurs and direct interaction with participants is possible. In this specific case, field research took place at the University of Azuay so as to get to know the real situation of English classes in the School of Psychology.

#### **Survey**

A questionnaire survey based on a series of questions was administered to the students of Psychology, to get their opinions about learning English as a university requirement.

#### **Test**

A test was necessary to analyze the current situation of the teaching learning process of the English language in the School of Psychology at the University of Azuay. This technique allowed us to gather data of the English level that the students of Psychology had before and after using the booklet containing the proposed activities.

### **3.3. Research tools**

The treatment was administered in one single period of four months. At the beginning, a survey was used to have some information about the students' background and to assure that the group kept certain homogeneity. The classes were carried out under an ESP perspective and students used the Booklet elaborated for this specific research. Later, a pre-test was used to determine the baseline of the research. Finally, and after the administration of the treatment, a



post test was applied to measure results and to reach conclusions. Some characteristics of the tools are presented:

### **Survey questionnaire for students of Psychology**

It was based on some clear and precise questions about the views that Psychology students have regarding the content and methods of teaching English in their degree course.

### **Pre-test**

It was previously applied to students before the use of the booklet in order to get to know the level of English students had. The tests were rated so as to have an idea of the real situation, and the results were considered in the construction of the booklet.

### **Post-test**

It was applied to students after using the booklet in order to get to know the progress of the students' learning, especially in their development of the reading skill.

## **3.4. Context**

The research took place at the School of Psychology of the University of Azuay, located in the city of Cuenca, province of Azuay. Most students come from high schools where English is taught with four or five hours a week. However, most of them present difficulties understanding texts in English despite of the fact that reading is the main skill to be developed in the university.

## **3.5. Participants**

The research participants were twenty-seven students of pre-intermediate level of English from the School of Psychology of the University of Azuay. The University assigned the course to the teacher-researcher and the institution was informed about the procedures of the research. Students accepted to participate in the research.



### **3.6. Resources**

#### **3.6.1 Materials**

Most of the words selected to be part of the booklet structured for this course were taken from academic articles on psychology and taking into account different sources. Students participated to suggest some of the topics that were included in the booklet. These texts were about five hundred words and the vocabulary is explicit for Psychology students. The booklet also presents a first unit with some tips to improve the reading skill in general. Some of the texts were modified according to students' interests and needs. Questions and activities have as a target the relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension.

#### **3.6.2 Human resources**

- Students of the School of Psychology of the University of Azuay
- Thesis Supervisor

#### **3.6.3 Material resources**

- Computer
- Printer
- Photocopies
- Paper
- Tools for Office
- Transportation



### 3.6.4 Economic resources

Tools	Price
Computer	600.00
Printer	180.00
Photocopies	30.00
Paper	15.00
Office tools	25.00
Transportation	30.00
Extras	50.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>930.00</b>

### 3.7. Operationalization

The improvement of students' reading comprehension ability was measured by a pre- test and a post test that evaluated the students' reading skill. The results were compared to determine the degree of improvement after the planned activities were applied. The results were expected to be positive. As a logical consequence of the students' reading comprehension ability, their capacity to reason and expose their ideas and conclusions critically was also measured by involving them in question-answer forums; that is, by making them participate in debates asking and answering questions on the topics studied or other similar themes, as well as by training them in writing activities where they could freely and sustainably present their opinions. The students' level of participation in debates was measured by their capacity to use the language proficiently and by how much they contributed with ideas/solutions to the problems/issues they were arguing about. Of course, the teacher prepared an Evaluation Sheet that considered the following aspects:

- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Fluency



- Capacity to relate previous to future ideas
- Capacity to contribute with solutions to the problems being discussed
- Tolerance and respect to others' opinions
- Capacity to summarize bigger concepts or ideas

This Evaluation Sheet measured both the quantitative and the qualitative level of the students' participation.

### **3.8. Procedure**

First, a survey and a pre-test were administered to the students of Psychology to determine the students' previous reading skill and critical thinking ability.

Both the questionnaire and the test were used to collect data when applying the content-based material, which was later analyzed and tabulated to determine the difficulties students had to understand written material and give critical opinions of the material they had read, as well as to look for possible solutions to help students overcome their limitations.

Then a booklet was created as a proposal to improve the students' reading skills through three units with critical thinking activities, including: tips for reading, effective reading strategies, skimming, scanning, and analytical reading.

For four months, students practiced and tried to improve their reading comprehension skill by being involved in reading strategies based on critical thinking.

After the treatment was administered, students were post-tested to check their progress. The post test data were tabulated and presented in graphics as can be seen in the next chapter. The analysis and interpretation of results led to obtain conclusions.



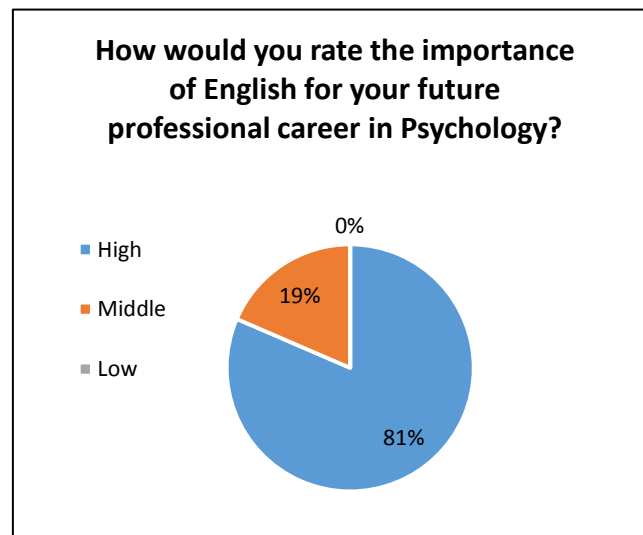


## CHAPTER IV - ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

### 4.1. Survey

The first survey was conducted to students of Psychology, in order to get to know their opinion about the teaching-learning process of the English language at the University of Azuay. The main objective of the survey was to create a booklet and design the treatment required to improve the students' performance. This survey was conducted in Spanish for a better understanding of the students, and these are the results:

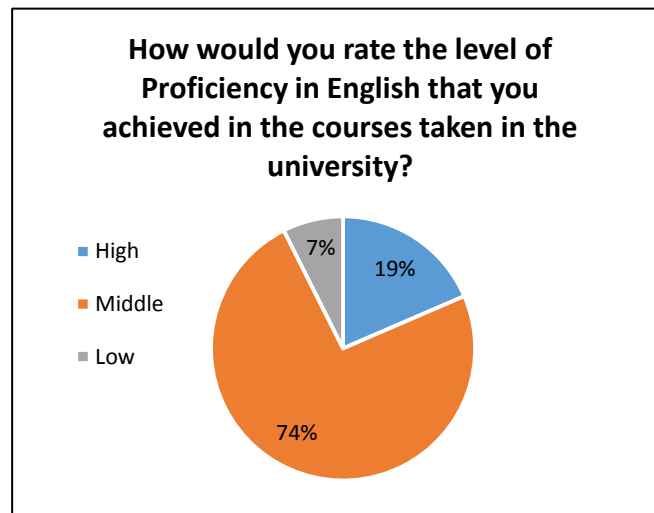
**Graphic 1. Importance of the English language**



**Source:** Survey to Psychology students  
**Made by:** Susana Castro

The above graphic shows that 81% of the students of Psychology consider that learning English as a second language is highly important for their future career, and 19% consider it of middle importance. For this reason, it was necessary to provide students with effective resources to help them get a good level of proficiency for their professional lives.

**Graphic 2. Students' level of Proficiency in English**

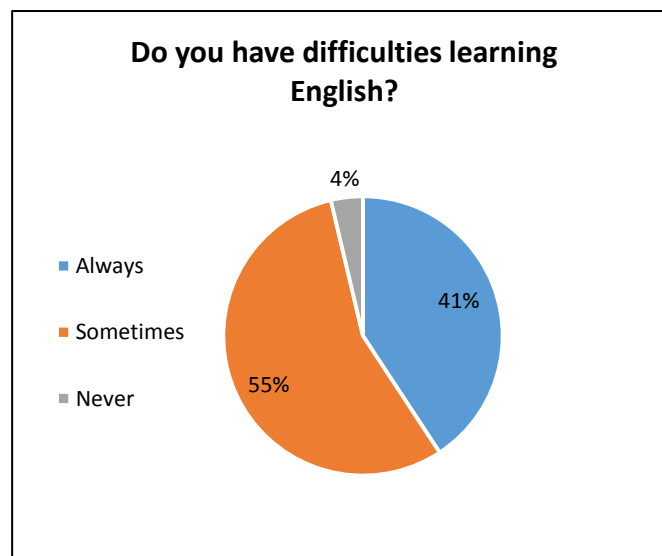


**Source:** Survey to Psychology students  
**Made by:** Susana Castro

Most students (74%) believe they have reached an intermediate level of English during the classes they had attended to at the university, 19% had a high level, and 7% a low level. Given that students have a good command of English, they need teaching strategies that taught they knowledge they had acquired until that moment, using techniques that taught them to understand English as a second language. It is also necessary to consider what Ausubel (548) mentions regarding the reading material and he suggests that it should be carefully chosen, based on the students' interests, degree course and prior knowledge so that they can find the material meaningful and develop their criteria for understanding, judging, and defining their opinions. This means that the teacher should know the situation of students' learning previously and choose the correct contents to satisfy according to their needs.



**Graphic 3. Difficulties when learning the English language**



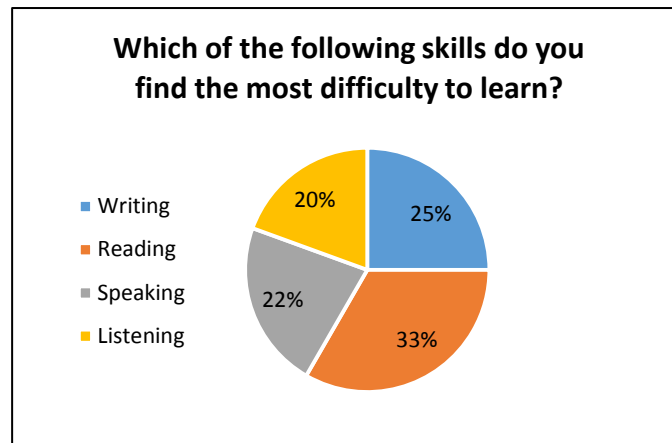
**Source:** Survey to Psychology students  
**Made by:** Susana Castro

The graph shows that 55% of the students sometimes have difficulty learning English, 41% say they always have difficulties, and only 4% mention never having difficulty learning English.

These data demonstrate that there were deficiencies in the education system that had been being used with this group of students of Psychology, or the teaching techniques did not match their needs. The teacher should be aware that the development of a student's knowledge may vary according to their capacity to develop specific activities. Guevara and Osorio (6) refer to intensive reading, which is simply careful reading of shorter, more difficult foreign language texts with the goal of completing and detailing understanding.

This type of reading involves learners reading in detail with specific learning aims and tasks, so it requires that student have some advanced skills when using the English language.

**Graphic 4. Most difficult skills to learn English**



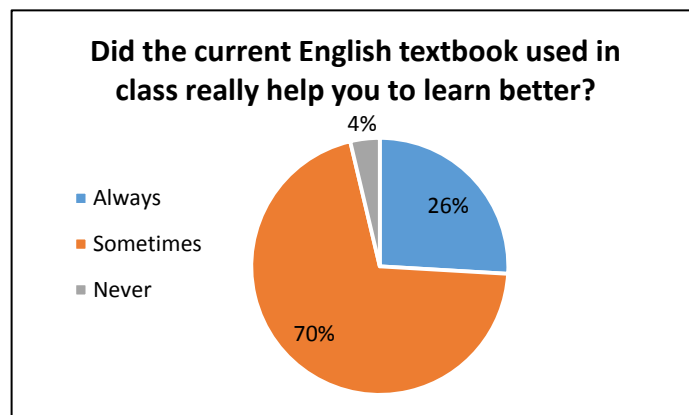
**Source:** Survey to Psychology students

**Made by:** Susana Castro

Regarding question number 3, this graph shows that the skill which students need the most attention to is reading (33%), followed by writing (25%), speaking (22%) and listening (20%). According to these results, the two areas that require most attention are reading and writing, which indicates that teachers should focus more attention on asking student to do more exercises like reading short or longer texts, reading techniques, creating essays, etc.

When referring to the importance of reading, Farhady (37-48) argues that since the language of science and technology is often English, reading in English has received priority among other objectives of English language teaching.

**Graphic 5. Contribution of the current textbook for learning English**



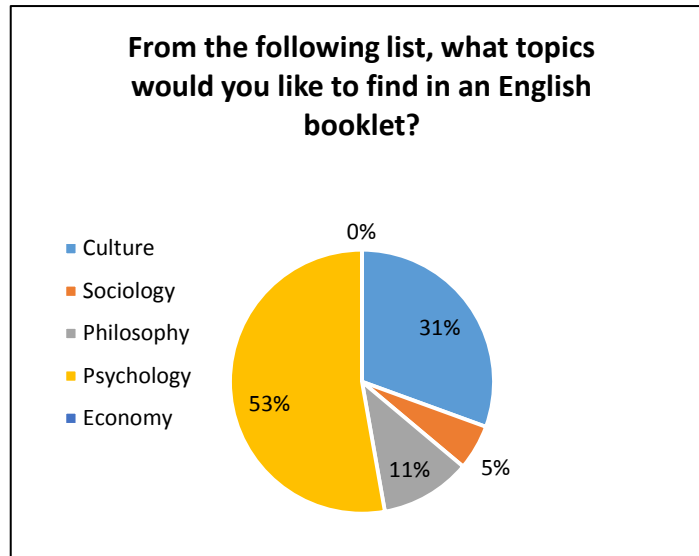
**Source:** Survey to Psychology students  
**Made by:** Susana Castro

Regarding the effectiveness of the English text that is currently used at the University of Azuay, students reported that the text sometimes helps them learn better (70%), 26% said that it always helps them learn better, 4% indicated that the text does not help them learn.

Stevens and Dudley-Evans (7) say that ESP emphasizes on the central importance of learners and their attitudes to learning. Learners were seen to have different needs and interests, which would have an important influence on their motivation to learn and, therefore, on the effectiveness of their learning. This demonstrates that a new English textbook is necessary to respond to the real needs of this group of students.

Based on English learning research, people learn languages when they have opportunities to understand and work with language in a context that they comprehend and find interesting (Nation 24), so they acquire English as they work with material which they find interesting and relevant. In this case, students were attracted by the Psychology readings since they guarantee an effective learning that prepares them for future situations.

### Graphic 6. Topics for the English booklet



**Source:** Survey to Psychology students  
**Made by:** Susana Castro

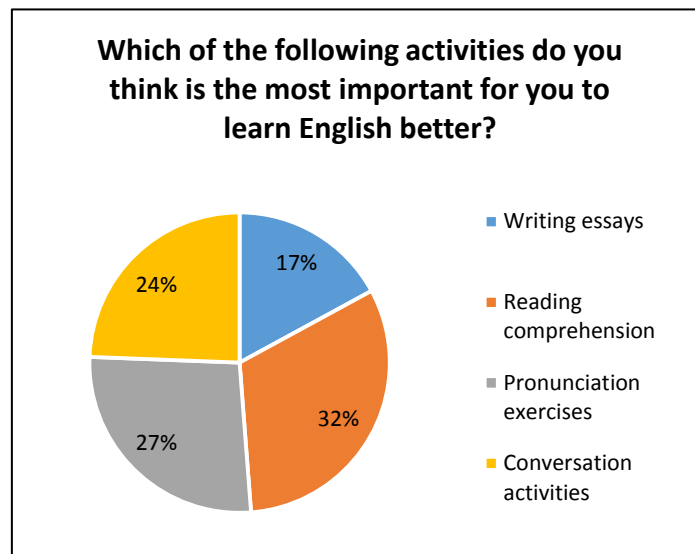
Regarding the topics that students require to study the English language, 53% would like to study Psychology issues, 31% culture, 11%, philosophy, and 5% Sociology. In this sense, Stevens considers that the absolute characteristics of English Language Teaching are:

- Designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
- Related in content (that is in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations, and activities. (Stevens 5)

With this information in mind, it is clear that students require the English teaching to be focused on their degree course. These results have also served to further develop the new English booklet proposed in this research.



**Graphic 7. Most important activities**



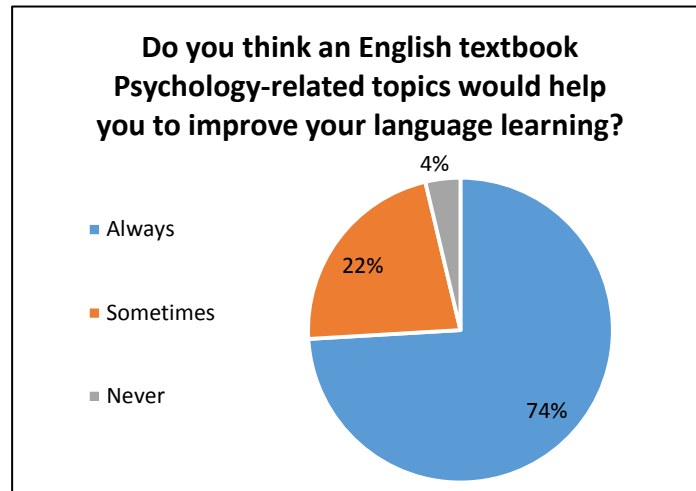
**Source:** Survey to Psychology students

**Made by:** Susana Castro

Among the most important activities to better learn English, 32% consider it necessary to have reading comprehension exercises, 27% pronunciation exercises, 24% conversation activities, and 17% writing essays. This goes with Feldman's findings (65) who notes that Cognitivism places emphasis on the role of the teacher in terms of the instructor's effectiveness to present instructional material in a manner that facilitates the students' learning; that is, helping students to review and connect previous learning on a topic before moving onto new ideas about that topic, helping students understand the material by organizing it effectively, understanding differences in students' learning styles.

In this sense, the data shows that students are interested in developing their comprehension skills and are also interested in pronunciation exercises. These preferences will be considered when choosing the content for the English booklet.

**Graphic 8. Interest in a new booklet for Psychology students**



**Source:** Survey to psychology students  
**Made by:** Susana Castro

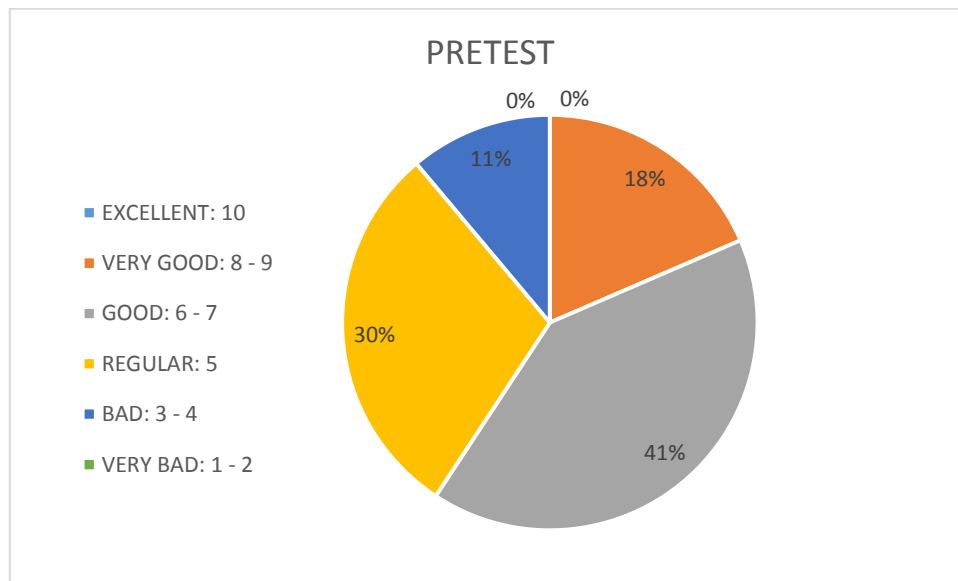
Finally, most students indicated that a new English textbook that focuses on Psychology would be a good tool to increase their level of learning, 22% said that it is sometimes helpful to improve English skills, and only 4% did not think it would be beneficial. This concept agrees with Fiorito's opinion about ESP. "The ESP approach enhances the relevance of what the students are learning and enables them to use the English they know to learn even more English, since their interest in their field will motivate them to interact with speakers and texts." (Fiorito 1)

With these data, it is possible to confirm that students require an English booklet with contents focused on Psychology topics, reading comprehension exercises, critical reading, and reading strategies in general, so students can practice their skills in the English language and raise their level of understanding of the target language.



## 4.2. Pre-test

**Graphic 9. Pre-test**



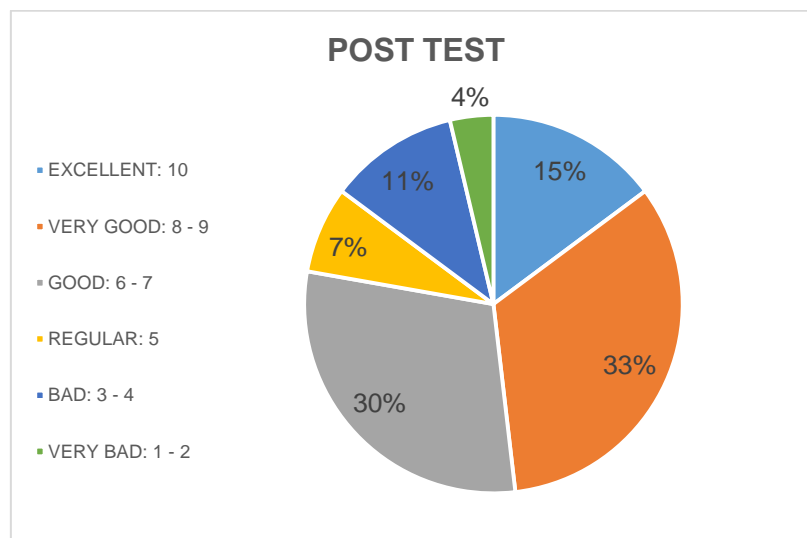
**Source:** Pre-test for Psychology students  
**Made by:** Susana Castro

The graphic above shows the results of the pre-test administered to Psychology students. This test was administered before designing the booklet, with the objective of identifying areas in which students need more attention, and analyzing their learning level by six different ratings on a total score of 10 points. 41% of the students of Psychology enrolled in the pre-intermediate level of English and received good grades, while 30% received average grades, 18% had very good grades and 11% received bad or low grades.

These data demonstrate that, initially, the group of students had positive grades; however, they still have problems to learn English, especially the reading skill, this being the reason that the elaboration of a new textbook for teaching of English language is totally justified.

### 4.3. Post-test

**Graphic 10. Post-test**



**Source:** Post-test for Psychology students

**Made by:** Susana Castro

Once the teacher used the new textbook in class for half a semester, a test was administered to evaluate the usefulness of the textbook for developing the skill of reading comprehension of the students of Psychology. The post-test had a maximum score of 10 points, but with similar characteristics of the pre-test.

The results showed that 33% of the students had very good grades, while 30% had good grades, 15% received the score of excellent, 7% satisfactory, 11% a bad score, and 4% had a score below 2, which is equivalent to very bad.

In sum, the survey showed that students have some habits that are prejudicial to their learning and that deepen the problems of reading comprehension they have. Likewise, the students' perception of their level of proficiency in the reading skill shows that they still have to work hard to improve their level of proficiency. One of the findings was the willingness of students to work with material that is related to their career so they can keep the interest in learning English. In general, it was shown that after applying the treatment with the proposed activities in the textbook, the level of reading comprehension increased, indicating that the introduction of this booklet in the English classes was useful for teaching English for Specific Purposes.



## CHAPTER V

### READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES BOOKLET



### READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES BOOKLET For Psychology students

## PRE-INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH LEVEL

By: Susana Castro

Student's name

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Class

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# UNIT 1

## READING TO LEARN

### TIPS FOR READING

---

Generally, when you have to read, just in that very moment you feel tired, you have problems concentrating and you are easily distracted. For that reason, in this first unit we will review some tips for developing the reading skill, and, the most importantly, for understanding the reading.

- Before starting to read, it is important that you have a comfortable reading environment at home or school. Then, sit in front of the text, close your eyes and take a deep breath to relax and show interest in what you are going to read.
- Every time you read, do this: think, preview, read and review.
- Read the main topic and think about the knowledge that you already have of it, which will give you a previous idea of what you will read. The main topic is usually stated at the beginning of the passage and you can get enough information by only reading the first sentence of this passage.
- When you read the text for the first time, do not try to understand every detail of the text, and if you see a word that you do not know, underline it and look for its meaning later. Try to read in context (Stop the reading whenever you come across an unfamiliar word, which may cause that their text loses its sense and makes comprehension hard.).
- If you do not understand some sentence or word, look away and try to restate what you think the text is saying; you can also write down a few notes or underline some parts as to check them later.



- If you consider it necessary, write some notes of the most important ideas that you get at the moment of reading.
- When you have already looked up for every unfamiliar word, try to read the whole text again.
- Use context clues to understand the reading.
- Apply skimming and scanning reading techniques (review more details about both strategies in the next units)
- When you have finished reading, review whether you have achieved an important level of comprehension of the text.
- If you still find the text difficult, leave it for some hours and come back to it. You may find that a second or third reading will give you a better understanding of the text. Take your time to get a really effective reading.
- Finally, enjoy your reading time!



## Activity 1

### HOW MUCH DID YOU LEARN?

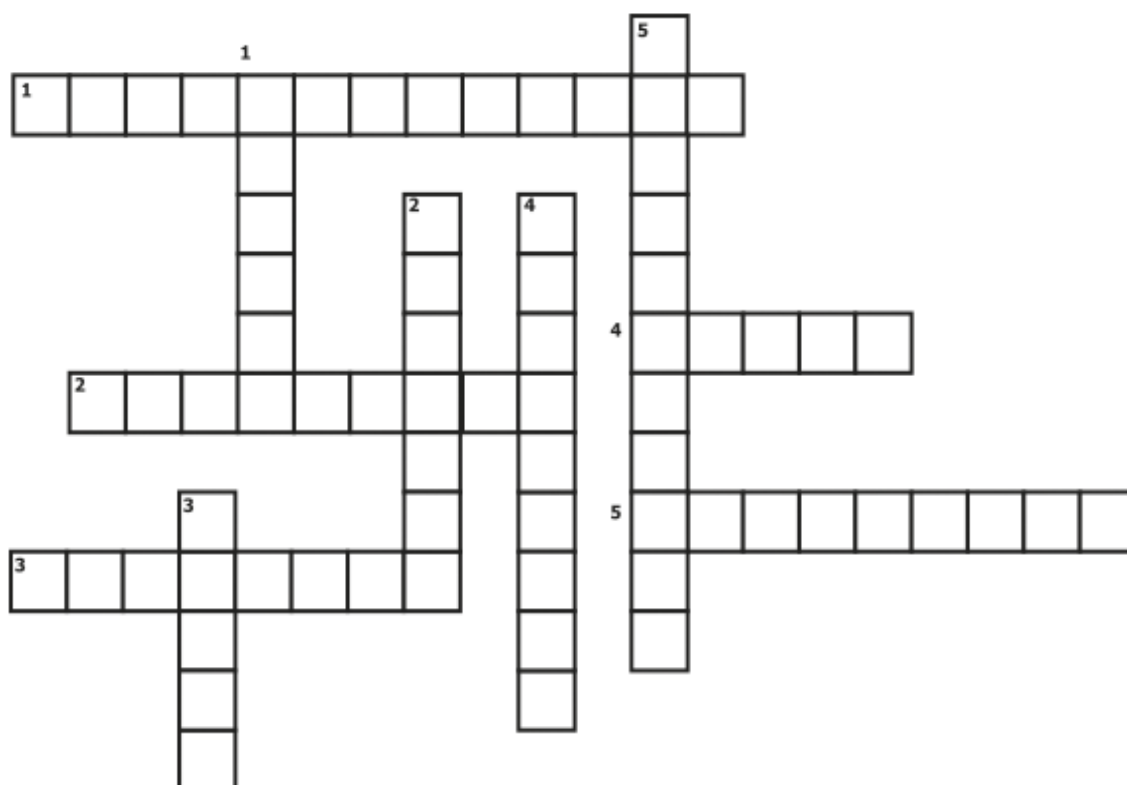
Complete the following sentences with the correct word. Then fill in the crossword:

#### DOWN

1. When you finish, it is necessary that you review the level of \_\_\_\_\_ that you have achieved.
2. Previous \_\_\_\_\_ that you already have about the topic may help you to understand it better.
3. You have two strategies to apply: skimming and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Sit in front of the text and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The main topic is usually stated at the \_\_\_\_\_ of the passage.

#### ACROSS

1. To get an effective reading, you have to remember four steps: think, preview, read, and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In this unit you learned about some \_\_\_\_\_ skills.
3. Remember that the most important tip is that you \_\_\_\_\_ reading.
4. While you are reading, you should \_\_\_\_\_ the words that you do not know, in order to stop the reading.
5. First, it is important that you have a \_\_\_\_\_ reading environment.



## Activity 2

### LET'S PRACTICE

1. Make sure that you are sitting comfortably, then close your eyes, take a deep breath and relax.



Source: [www.condenastore.com](http://www.condenastore.com)

2. Read the main topic and look at the picture with attention to gain an idea of what the text is all about, then write down some ideas or previous knowledge that you have about this.

Laughter. The more, the better



Source:

[www.scientificamerican.com](http://www.scientificamerican.com)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Now, read the text using the reading tips that you learned.

\*\*\*

Laughter. The more, the better





A laugh a day may keep the doctor away. Humor is good medicine. Research has shown many benefits of laughter. It helps keep our mind and body healthy. It relaxes our muscles and increases circulation. Laughter increases the oxygen level in our blood and lowers blood pressure. It also boosts the immune system. Infections are less likely to strike if we are laughing.



Laughter is a form of release. It rids our body of stressful emotions and reduces the level of stress hormones. Think of a time when you had a good belly laugh. Was your whole body engaged? Laughter can be a total body experience, much like exercise.

According to Doctor Pam Schiller, laughter has two stages. One is the arousal phase that increases the heart rate. The other is the resolution phase that allows the heart to rest. She says that, “Laughing gives the diaphragm, abdomen, respiratory system and facial muscles a complete work-out.”

The benefits of laughter can also be seen in the brain. Research tells us that humor stimulates parts of the brain known as reward centers. These reward centers release endorphins that combat pain and create a natural high. The brain feels rewarded by finding something funny.

Laughter and humor are two powerful tools. Learn to laugh at yourself. Don’t worry or analyze why people laugh – just join in! Think funny thoughts. Sing silly songs. Read some funny jokes such as, “Why are basketball players sloppy eaters? Because they always dribble.” “What has more lives than a cat? A frog – it croaks every night!”

A smile is the first step toward laughter. Smile often. Look in the mirror and smile at yourself. Smile at your co-workers. Smile at your spouse, or with your children. Smile at strangers on the street. Smile at friends that you meet. Remember, “The day goes the way your mouth turns!” (Marshall Adult Education 1)

\*\*\*



4. If you have underlined any unfamiliar words while you were reading, write these words below and look for their meaning up. After you find the meaning of every word, try to read again.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Write down the most important ideas or details that you got about the text.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Finally, try to answer the following questions about the text that you have read.

1. What does the phrase "The day goes, the way your mouth turns," mean?

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2. How does laughter affect stress?

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3. In the context of the reading, what does the word "**benefit**" mean?

---

4. What does laughter do to the brain?

---



---



# UNIT 2

## EFFECTIVE READING STRATEGIES

### Skimming and scanning

Skimming and scanning are two specific speed-reading techniques which enable you to cover a vast amount of material very rapidly. These techniques are similar in process but different in purpose.

#### 1. SKIMMING

---

Skimming is a technique of rapidly moving the eyes over a text with the purpose of getting only the main ideas and a general overview of the content or an overview of the author's main line of argument. This method involves reading key parts of the text. There are two basic skim-reading techniques:

Start-finish: This technique is based on the idea that all well-written articles, essays, and chapters of books are structured in the following way:

- + Introduction
- + Body
- + Conclusion

This means that the central ideas should be presented three times:

- + Noted briefly in the introduction.
- + Discussed in detail in the body of the text.
- + Reviewed briefly in the conclusion.

The beginning and ending paragraphs of a text should provide summaries of its central ideas. The strategy here is to carefully read:

- + The first few paragraphs of each chapter or section.
- + The final paragraph or conclusion of each chapter or section.

First sentences: This technique assumes that the first or opening sentence of each paragraph introduces the main point(s) to be discussed in that paragraph. So, reading only the opening sentence of each paragraph often gives us a clearer understanding of the author's reasoning and the structure of the



argument than just relying on the introduction and conclusion. Once we have established that the material is what we need, then we can re-read it.

The first sentence technique is also an effective strategy to use when note taking from books (and/or chapters of books) and articles. It can be used to create effective summaries of other people's writings - remembering, of course, that the sentences are still the author's words. Once we have created the summaries we will still have to rewrite them in our own words. This is known as *paraphrasing*.

How to use the skimming technique:

1. Read the title, subtitles, and subheadings to find out what the text is about.
2. Look at the illustrations that give you further information about the topic.
3. Read the first and last sentence of each paragraph.
4. Don't read every word or every sentence. Let your eyes skim over the text, taking in key words.
5. Continue to think about the meaning of the text.

When to use the skimming technique:

1. When you need to know the overall sense or the main ideas of a text.
2. When there are large amounts of reading and limited time to review it in detail.
3. When you are seeking for specific information rather than reading for comprehension or pleasure.
4. When it is necessary to find out if it is a book that should be read at all or in more detail.
5. When you need to know if a text may be of interest in one's research.



## 2. SCANNING

---

Scanning is a fast reading technique to establish where specific information is located in a book or article. This technique can be used to look up a phone number, read through the small ads in a newspaper, or for browsing TV schedules, catalogues or used to read web pages when we are surfing on the Internet. For these tasks, you do not need to read or understand every word.

The process to apply the scanning method are the following:

**Step 1:** Open the book and look at the table of contents located at the front of the book. It will list most, but not necessarily all, of the following subsections:

- ✚ A preface
- ✚ A list of diagrams or tables or illustrations
- ✚ An introduction
- ✚ The various chapters in sequence
- ✚ A conclusion
- ✚ A bibliography
- ✚ An index.

**Step 2:** Read the chapter headings. Do they contain the information that you are looking for? If not, then go to the index at the back of the book.

**Step 3:** Search the index for relevant topics or key words. If this also draws a blank, then put the book away and look for another one that might be more fruitful for your topic.

**Step 4:** When you find a relevant reference:

- ✚ In the **table of contents** go to the appropriate section of the book and read the first two paragraphs. These often contain a statement about what information will be covered. This will help you assess whether the material is relevant for your topic. If you are still uncertain about the usefulness of the material, then read the final two paragraphs of the summary
- ✚ In the **index**, you are able to find the appropriate page or pages in the book. Find the paragraph in which the reference appears. Read the



paragraph. If necessary, read the paragraph before and after the one specified by index entry.

How to use the scanning technique:

1. Start at the beginning of the passage.
2. Move your eyes quickly over the lines, looking for key words related to the information you want to find.
3. Stop scanning and begin reading as soon as you find any of the key words you are looking for.

When to use this technique:

1. When you need to find a particular or specific piece of information.
2. When you only need to extract specific details from a text.
3. When studying or looking to find specific information from a book or article quickly as there is not always time to read every word. For example: the "What's on TV" section of your newspaper or an airplane schedule.

Some tips to apply the scanning technique:

1. Do not try to read every word. Instead, let your eyes move quickly across the page until you find what you are looking for.
2. Use clues on the page, such as headings and titles, to help you.
3. In a dictionary or phone book, use the 'header' words to help you scan. You can find these in bold type at the top of each page.
4. If you are reading for study, start by thinking up or writing down some questions that you want to answer. Doing this can focus your mind and help you find the facts or information that you need more easily.
5. Many texts use A-Z order. These include everyday materials such as the phone book and indexes to books and catalogues.
6. There are many ways to practice scanning skills. Try looking up a favorite recipe in the index of a cookbook, search for a plumber in your local Yellow Pages, or scan web pages on the Internet to find specific information.



## Activity 1

### HOW MUCH DID YOU LEARN?

Complete the following sentences with the correct word. Then find the words on the word search:

1. Skimming is a method of rapidly moving the \_ \_ \_ \_ over text.
2. Chapters of books are structured in three parts: introduction, body and \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_.
3. The first or opening sentence of each paragraph introduces the \_ \_ \_ \_ point.
4. When you have created the summaries and will still have to rewrite them in your own words, it is known as \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_.
5. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ is a technique used to get only the main ideas and a general overview of the content.
6. The use of the skimming technique does not require you to read every word or every \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_; you only read over the text taking in key words.
7. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ is a fast reading technique to establish where specific information is located in a book or article.
8. If the chapter headings do not contain the information that you are looking for, then go to the \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ for relevant topics.
9. To apply the scanning technique, move your eyes quickly over the lines looking for \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ related to the information you want to find.
10. Use \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ on the page, such as headings and titles, to help you.



## Activity 2

### LET'S PRACTICE

1. Please remember the tips reviewed in UNIT 1 to find a comfortable reading.
2. Read the title to find out what the text is about.

### Early signs of Autism

3. Talk with your teacher and classmates about your first ideas about the text.
4. Look at the illustration that gives you further information about the topic.



Source: [www.autismodiario.com](http://www.autismodiario.com)

5. Write three things that you know about Autism:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

6. In the text below identify the introduction, body, and conclusion.
7. Read the first and last sentence of each paragraph. Do not read every word or every sentence. Let your eyes scan over the text, taking in key words of relevant references.

.....\*\*\*.....



## EARLY SIGNS OF AUTISM



**Source:** [www.autismodiario.com](http://www.autismodiario.com)

1. Sam is a toddler that is not developing at the same rate as his peers. At age two, his parents noticed that his language was delayed. He did not respond to his name when called. Sam also did not like interacting with other children or playing “peek-a-boo” with his parents. After his parents discussed their concerns with their pediatrician, they had Sam assessed. Once Sam was tested, they learned that he had Autism.
2. Autism is a brain disorder that affects the development of children starting at a young age. The causes of Autism are unknown and it is not easily detected until about age two or three. There are different degrees of Autism which are rated on a spectrum scale. A mild case is on one end of the spectrum and often referred to as Asperger’s Syndrome. Children with Aspergers are usually fairly high functioning and intelligent. Their disability is in the ability to relate to others. On the other end of the spectrum, severe cases of Autism can occur. Some of these cases include the inability to communicate entirely.
3. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 150 children have Autism. It is thought to be on the rise, and it is three to four times more likely to occur in boys than in girls. Siblings of a child with Autism are also more at risk for having Autism. All races, social classes and ethnicities are affected by Autism. Because early intervention is so



important, it is essential for parents to know the signs that may indicate the need to be screened by a doctor.

4. First Signs, Inc. lists the following as early signs of Autism:
  - Little or no eye contact
  - Does not respond to name, acts deaf
  - Language delay
  - Does not meet developmental milestones (i.e. crawling, walking)
  - Uses repetitive actions or words
  - Displays hand flapping and/or toe walking
  - Regression or loss of skills
  - Demonstrates inappropriate play or behavior
  - Prefers to be alone
  - Over or under-reactive sensory input (i.e. touch, sound, taste, sight, hearing)
  - Rocks or bangs head, likes spinning
  
5. If you have a child or you know a child that demonstrates some of these signs, and you are concerned that he or she might have Autism, talk to the child's doctor. The sooner a child with Autism is diagnosed, the sooner he or she can start receiving special services and help that will lead to greater success for the child and family. (Marshall Adult Education 1)

.....\*\*\*.....

**8. Write down some key words that you got from the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.**

Introduction: \_\_\_\_\_

Body: \_\_\_\_\_

Conclusion: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Choose the words that you did not know and find their meaning:**




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**10. Skim the text trying to get its the meaning. Then write down some main ideas that you got:**

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**11. Finally, try to answer the following questions about the text that you already skimmed and scanned:**

5. What causes Autism?

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6. Who is Sam in the text?

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7. In paragraph number 3 we can read: "Sam was assessed for Autism." What does **assess** mean?

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8. What are some signs of Autism? (List at least three.)

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9. What do you have to do if you have a child or you know a child that demonstrates signs of Autism?

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# UNIT 3

## ANALYTICAL READING

Analytical reading is another style of reading that helps us understand the author's meaning. It may also involve techniques to improve our ability to read aloud. The style is based on logical principles of observing how writers use phrases and emphasis to communicate their meaning through an active and systematic multi-step process based on two approaches to understand what you read: the SQ3R technique and thinking through reading. (Charles Darwin University 1)

### THE SQ3R TECHNIQUE

#### S = Survey

- Glance through the whole chapter, section, or article
- Read the introduction
- Read the headings and subheadings (How is the text organized?)
- Skim for key questions, key information

#### Q= Question

For each section, ask:

- What is the main point?
- What evidence is there to support that point?
- What examples explain the main point?

#### 3R = Read, Recite, and Review

##### R1: Read

Begin to read the material section by section. Actively search for the answers to the questions you have asked yourself. Make notes about important points.

Link the information with what you already know and use this to help evaluate the author's statements.



## R2: Recite

After reading each section, recall the important points – say these aloud and write them down in the margins of the text. Make your notes in short phrases rather than full sentences. You may also highlight key information.

## R3: Review

Look back over the whole chapter or article at the way the information fitted together and how it addressed each of your questions. Think about what you have understood from the reading. Summarize the main ideas of the text in writing. Rewrite the notes you have taken (or paraphrase underlined sections) for easy review/reference later.

## THINKING THROUGH READING

This technique involves enhancing your understanding of what you read by recognizing the level of information that it contains. This involves three levels of recognition:

- ✓ What does the writer say?
  - This is literal recognition. It is concerned with the surface information conveyed by the writer's words.
- ✓ What does the writer mean?
  - This is interpretive recognition. We infer meaning from what the writer says. This is what is usually meant when we talk about reading between the lines.
- ✓ How do I connect this with what I already know or need to know?
  - This is connective recognition. We look for connections between the literal and interpretive meanings with what we already know or need to know. In this way, we can:
    - Find new solutions to problems
    - Reach a new understanding
    - Change our point of view.



## Activity 1

### HOW MUCH DID YOU LEARN?

Read the following phrases and find the correct technique. You can use the number code:

NUMBER CODE				1 A	2 B
3 C	4 D	5 E	6 F	7 G	8 H
9 I	10 J	11 K	12 L	13 M	14 N
15 O	16 P	17 Q	18 R	19 S	20 T
21 U	22 V	23 W	24 X	25 Y	26 Z

1. Read the headings and subheadings.	19/21/18/22/5/25 -----
2. This style of reading is based upon logical principles of observing how writers use phrases and emphasis to communicate their meaning.	1/14/1/12/25/20/9/3/1/12 -----
3. Recall the important points.	18/5/3/9/20/5 -----
4. What evidence is there to support that point?	17/21/5/19/20/9/15/14 -----
5. Link the information with what you already know.	18/5/1/4 -----
6. Summarize the main ideas of the text in writing.	18/5/22/9/5/23 -----

## Activity 2

### LET'S PRACTICE

### Units 1 and 2

1. Remember to apply the reading techniques of Unit 1 and Unit 2.
2. Look at the illustration that gives you further information about the topic:



Source: [www.health.com](http://www.health.com) (1)

Write three ideas you have about the reading based on the illustration:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Read the topic to get more ideas about the reading:

### Pregnancy and Depression

4. Skim for key words.

5. Focus and answer these three questions:

- What is the main point?
- What evidence is there to support that point?
- What examples explain the main point?

6. Ask yourself other questions to go deeper into the contents of this reading. (For example: What is the main problem?)

7. Let's read:

.....\*\*\*.....



## PREGNANCY AND DEPRESSION

Depression can be described as feeling sad, blue, unhappy, or miserable. Most of us feel this way at one time or another for short periods. True clinical depression is a mood disorder in which feelings of sadness, loss, anger, or frustration interfere with everyday life for an extended time. Depression can be mild, moderate, or severe.



Researchers believe that depression is one of the most common complications during and after pregnancy. Often the depression is not recognized or treated because some normal pregnancy changes cause similar symptoms and are happening at the same time. Tiredness, problems sleeping, stronger emotional reactions and changes in body weight may occur during pregnancy and after pregnancy. These symptoms may also be signs of depression.

There may be a number of reasons why a woman gets depressed. Hormone changes or a stressful life event, such as a death in the family, can cause chemical changes in the brain that lead to depression. Depression is also an illness that runs in some families. Other times, it's not clear what causes depression.

During pregnancy, these factors may increase a woman's chance of depression: history of depression or substance abuse; family history of mental illness; little support from family and friends; marital or financial problems; young age (of mother).

After pregnancy hormonal changes in a woman's body may trigger symptoms of depression. The amount of two female hormones, estrogen and progesterone, in a woman's body increases greatly during pregnancy. In the first 24 hours after childbirth, the amount of these hormones rapidly drops back down to their normal non-pregnant levels. Researchers think the fast change in hormone levels may lead to depression, just as smaller changes in hormones can affect a woman's mood before she gets her menstrual period.



Levels of thyroid hormones may also drop after giving birth. The thyroid is a small gland in the neck that helps to regulate your metabolism (how your body uses and stores energy from food). Low thyroid levels can cause symptoms of depression including depressed mood, decreased interest in things, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, sleep problems, and weight gain. A simple blood test can tell if this condition is causing a woman's depression.

Any of these symptoms that last longer than two weeks are a sign of depression: feeling restless or irritable; feeling sad and overwhelmed; crying a lot; eating too little or too much; sleeping too little or too much; trouble focusing; feeling worthless or guilty; withdrawing from family and friends.

Women should speak to their doctor or midwife if they are having symptoms of depression while they are pregnant or after they deliver their baby. A doctor or midwife can help diagnose depression and provide women with helpful referrals.

Some other helpful tips to share with pregnant women and new moms are:

- ☐ Try to get as much rest as you can. Nap when the baby naps.
- ☐ Stop putting pressure on yourself to do everything. Ask for help with household chores and nighttime feedings.
- ☐ Talk to your husband, partner, family, and friends about how you are feeling.
- ☐ Do not spend a lot of time alone. Get dressed and leave the house. Take a short walk.
- ☐ Talk with other mothers, so you learn from their experiences. (Marshall Adult Education 1)

.....\*\*\*.....

**8. Make notes or highlight some key information to recall the important points.**



**9. Link key information with what you already know to support your ideas. Then share this information with your classmates.**

**10. Look back over the reading and write down some short phrases about what you have understood from the reading.**

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**11. Answer to the questions you asked yourself at the beginning of the reading.**

**What is the main point?**

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**What evidence is there to support that point?**

---

**What examples explain the main point?**

---

---

**12. Finally, answer the following questions about the reading to analyze your reading skills development:**

**1. What are some signs of depression?**

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**2. Why can depression be difficult to identify in pregnant women?**

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**3. What hormones can affect depression?**

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**4. How does depression differ from feeling sad or upset?**

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**5. What other events besides pregnancy can cause depression?**

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## CONCLUSIONS

- The comparison between the pre-test and the post-test determined that students significantly improved their reading comprehension skills. Most of students who performed a very good level at the beginning moved to excellent, and a lot of students from the good level improved to a very good level. Some of the reasons for the success may be the constant motivation students had since they were reading topics according to their interests and the pressure to be frequently asked to think critically about different themes so they were able to understand what they were reading. In the process of developing critical thinking, they had to acquire language to complete the exercises and do different activities.
- Critical thinking is the base on which education should be built. It implies internal structural questioning and social phenomena that directly affect student's development and it also helps to develop English language skills like reading. One reflection that this research has shown is that students should be aware of the context they live in and should care about their community problems and also they need to know that learning a language is not just a mechanical or grammar process but a series of situations related to culture, society, economy, philosophy and other aspects given by the relationship of students' background and the historical circumstances of a language.
- In the context of learning a second language, critical thinking means developing qualities in students that allow them to learn English by the constant destruction of established paradigms. It will force students to constantly think about what they are writing, speaking, listening and reading, and make first language structures crack inside student's mind, producing new necessary mental outlines for the acquisition of the new language. This means that students will be able to recognize that what is correct for certain culture could be



inappropriate for another. Sometimes students cannot see these differences because they try to use their native culture rules of speaking when communicating in the foreign language; in this respect, critical thinking helps the development of these kinds of skills. For example, traditional monolingual dictionaries are directed to help with production and interpretation but they do not deal with the understanding of words, phrases that students have read or heard. Besides, a foreign student looks up for words and phrases in the dictionary to use them correctly and appropriately more often than a native speaker. As a result, a learner's dictionary and a native speaker's dictionary are created to decoding but the difference is that the first one has an essential characteristic of encoding which is relatively intensive and relatively extensive for the second one.

- This research also shows that an English teacher should be aware of the whole students' educational process to clarify their needs, and not only to teach are the contents and objectives of an English course. Teachers have to start making an intense analysis of students groups (degree courses, professions, English level, culture, social context, etc.), course programs (Module syllabuses), institution's missions and visions, etc., and this goes beyond English. Educators need to use all the necessary strategies and techniques to get the most appropriate information. It means that teachers have to make an examination to identify the right actions to start a learning process in order to achieve the best results at the end of it. Consequently, teachers will make appropriate and upcoming actions at the beginning, during the course, and at the end of it. And this is the reason that the present research is a proposal based on the previous analysis of students' weaknesses and strengths. For this reason, reading strategies to develop critical thinking have been elaborated with the purpose of fulfilling the students' needs under the paradigm of teaching English for specific purposes (ESP).



- Another important conclusion is the necessity to improve English at university level as an immediate requirement for workers, professionals, master programs students, etc. The different necessities and interests, the permanent changes of the English language, and the demands of the new world generate the obligation of using English for specific purposes or specific language needs. Then educators must diagnose the whole group of students and prepare active and innovated strategies aimed at communication, to make students work as a team during the ESP course or module. Many universities and educational institutions have faced the necessity to help under graduate students of different areas to design, prepare, and implement ESP courses, modules, or programs. Psychology students at the University of Azuay will be open to study and accept the importance to learn a language when the program helps them understand elements of their own degree course. This means that topics related to Psychology, like critical thinking, make students learn English through their own knowledge of the subject.
- It has also been established in this investigation that the recollection of the right strategies and material to prepare a course is fundamental, considering the lack of right material may influence on the construction of the objectives of the ESP program. If students cannot have access to the information contained in a topic, the ESP class will not have a real purpose, a global interest and it will confuse students' criteria. In this research, a new booklet has been designed. It contains a series of activities and classroom exercises that promote the identification of word meaning in different contexts and the retention of vocabulary.
- By using the English booklet designed with activities and readings on topics of Psychology, students were given the chance to develop reading strategies related to their profession. The texts were chosen by previously, consulting Psychology students about their topics of



interest. Consequently, this research has demonstrated that it is possible to develop students' skills by using material related to their needs and interests and that the methodology used may be successful at the moment of motivating students to learn the target language through a different perspective, like for example critical thinking.

- In this survey, students were able to get to know information about their English learning background, and has determined that most of them consider English an important, tool for their academic lives. However, most of them admitted having problems learning English and most of them acknowledged having problems in reading comprehension. Students also considered that a text based on their interests and needs (Psychology) is important to improve their English skills since the current text does not always satisfy their expectations. It shows that there is a contrast between their comprehension of English as something important in their future academic lives and what they really learn despite of this knowledge. Therefore, this research has demonstrated that any kind of motivation is not enough to learn English. This is a problem that can be solved if teachers start to find real students' interests in learning English.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

- At national level, it is suggested to pay attention to higher education English programs since authorities have focused their efforts on school and high school training teachers to improve the curriculum. However, most students who finish their university careers should be trained to take exams like FCE, TOEFL, IELTS, among others, to get admitted in universities and colleges around the world. This means to restructure old systems and approaches, to change the operation of the universities, so as to allow allowing other kinds of perspectives, like ESP.
- The University of Azuay should analyze the role of English under a wider perspective. Over the last decades, English has played an important role around the world as a common language for different purposes, such as economic, educational, scientific, and entertainment exchange between countries and, in particular, between people considering it is the language of our study. The English language opens doors for global communication and business because this language has become a powerful tool in terms of improving productivity and driving growth where it is used. Therefore, it is important for the institution to acknowledge the advantages of increasing the support for English learning research and class methodologies to acquire a second language.
- The Language Department of the University of Azuay should analyze if every text used to teach English is appropriate for each degree course. This does not mean that the language Department should separate students in groups according to their degree courses, but to make an analysis of students' needs and interests as to motivate them; methods for learning English may be really effective and serve students in their professional lives. The institutional and organizational environment of teaching cannot be guided by the rigidity and scarce creativity but by the fact of breaking those barriers



that are given by laws, models, and paradigms. It should be remembered that school context has its own educational characteristics everywhere so that any teaching pattern will be adapted or even the institution with its teachers should be able to create an educational model based on the student's reality.

- Working with critical thinking implies a different role for the teacher. In a class, students should frequently practice conversation and readings that promote greater interaction and participation in critical thinking exercises, so that students can make better use of what they learn. Nowadays, the current role of the teacher is focused on facilitation. This means that he/she becomes a bridge that links the educational processes of quality planned from state and institutional entities with the evolutionary development of students. This bond is necessary inside the classrooms since, inside the educational quality, there is a series of factors that contribute to students' development and performance outside the classroom, such as appropriate infrastructure, didactic material, family collaboration, support from authorities of the institutions, among other factors.
- Due to the fact that this booklet has been designed in three Units, it is recommended that teachers work in the coordination and implementation of new Units which might be added to add them to this project and provide students with an important resource for learning. It is expected that all teachers in the pre-intermediate level of the of Psychology degree course use this booklet in their classes as a complement to their current teaching method. The project can be implemented with groups of students from other degree courses to check if the results and improvement are the same and then generate bigger programs that include the creation of complementary texts based on students' degree courses and critical thinking.



- Research on English learning methodologies should deal with the incidence of new methodologies based on students' and teachers' weaknesses and needs. This must start with a general evaluation of English institution at the University of Azuay and then enhance teachers to implement scientific research that may include different perspectives according to the parameters established by the institution.



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## APPENDICES

### *Appendix 1.*

#### Survey for Psychology students

#### ENCUESTA PARA ESTUDIANTES DE PSICOLOGÍA

La presente encuesta tiene como finalidad conocer las perspectivas y los requerimientos de los estudiantes de Psicología de la Universidad del Azuay, con respecto a los contenidos estudiados para el aprendizaje del idioma inglés. Motivo por el cual la información recolectada tendrá fines netamente académicos y será expresamente utilizada en el desarrollo de un trabajo de graduación. Agradecemos su colaboración.

\*Por favor marque su respuesta con una **X** en el casillero correspondiente:

1. ¿Cómo calificaría la importancia del idioma inglés para su futuro desempeño profesional en el área de Psicología?
  - a. Alta ☐
  - b. Media ☐
  - c. Baja ☐
  
2. ¿Cómo calificaría el nivel de aprendizaje del idioma inglés que usted ha alcanzado durante los cursos recibidos en la universidad?
  - a. Alto ☐
  - b. Medio ☐
  - c. Bajo ☐
  
3. ¿Tiene dificultades con el aprendizaje del idioma inglés?
  - a. Siempre ☐
  - b. A veces ☐
  - c. Nunca ☐
  
4. ¿En cuál de las siguientes áreas tiene más dificultades para aprender?
  - a. Escribir ☐
  - b. Leer ☐
  - c. Hablar ☐
  - d. Escuchar ☐





5. ¿El texto de inglés que utiliza en la clase le ayuda a entender mejor el idioma?
  - a. Siempre ☐
  - b. A veces ☐
  - c. Nunca ☐
  
6. ¿Cree usted que los contenidos del texto que utiliza para el aprendizaje de inglés se vinculan con su carrera?
  - a. Siempre ☐
  - b. A veces ☐
  - c. Nunca ☐
  
7. De la siguiente lista, ¿Qué temáticas le gustaría que se trataran un texto para el aprendizaje del idioma?
  - a. Cultura General ☐
  - b. Sociología ☐
  - c. Filosofía ☐
  - d. Psicología ☐
  - e. Economía ☐
  
8. ¿Cuál de las siguientes actividades cree usted que es más importante para que pueda aprender mejor el idioma inglés?
  - a. Escritura de ensayos ☐
  - b. Lectura comprensiva ☐
  - c. Ejercicios de pronunciación ☐
  - d. Actividades de conversación ☐
  
9. ¿Cree usted que contar con un texto de inglés enfocado a temas de Psicología le ayudaría a mejorar su aprendizaje del idioma?
  - a. Mucho ☐
  - b. Poco ☐
  - c. Nada ☐



## Appendix 2.

### Pre-test

#### PRE-TEST PARA ESTUDIANTES DE PSICOLOGÍA

El siguiente pre-test tiene como finalidad identificar el nivel de inglés que tienen los estudiantes de Psicología de la Universidad del Azuay, así como determinar las áreas que necesitan reforzarse para un mejor aprendizaje del idioma, basado en el desarrollo de habilidades de lectura comprensiva. Por lo cual la información y resultados recolectados tendrán fines netamente académicos y serán expresamente utilizados en el desarrollo de un trabajo de graduación. Agradecemos su colaboración.

#### 1. Read the next topic. Then answer the question.

“Caffeine”

What do you think the topic is talking about?

- a. Different ways to make a good coffee
- b. The problems caused by caffeine
- c. Products containing caffeine
- d. The benefits of caffeine

#### 2. Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

.....

Are you feeling tired? Is your energy level low? Maybe some caffeine is what you need! How about a cup of coffee or tea? Maybe you prefer Coke, Pepsi, or Red Bull? A piece of chocolate could energize you. Caffeine is found in all of these.

Do you drink caffeine? Many people do. In fact, many folks can't wake-up in the morning without their cup of coffee! It has an energizing effect that makes them feel awake and alive. Caffeine makes people feel less tired. Caffeine also keeps people awake. For some people, this is not a good thing. Many who drink caffeine have trouble sleeping at night. Nighttime users of caffeine are especially bothered by having trouble falling asleep.

Other people like that caffeine can help them stay awake at night. Late-night drivers and those that work the night-shift need to stay awake. However, doctors warn that no one should use caffeine in place of sleep. A healthy night's sleep is very important for a healthy body.



Too much caffeine can be unhealthy. In fact, it can be very bad for you. Caffeine stimulates your heart. It makes the heart beat faster. Caffeine can raise your blood pressure. Too much of it may cause heart trouble. If you have a lot of caffeine, you may get jumpy or nervous. You may also get headaches. If you think caffeine is bothering you, use less of it. You may also want to try decaffeinated drinks. These drinks have had the caffeine removed, or taken out.

.....

**a. What food or drinks have caffeine?**

---



---

**b. What are some unhealthy effects of caffeine?**

---



---

**c. Why do some people like caffeine?**

---



---

**3. The word “stimulates” in the sentence “Caffeine stimulates your heart” is closest in meaning to:**

- a. Promote
- b. Boost
- c. Fuel

**4. It can be inferred from the passage that**

- a. Drinking too much caffeine is good to have energy but can be unhealthy.
- b. High blood pressure is the principal cause of heart trouble.
- c. Coke, Pepsi, or Red Bull makes people feel less tired and happier.

**5. In paragraph 4, why does the author write about decaffeinated drinks?**



- a. They cause headaches.
- b. They are so unhealthy as caffeine drinks.
- c. They are a good option for people rather than caffeine bothering them.

**6. According to the passage, what happens when you drink too much caffeine?**

- a. It gives you more energy and makes you feel happier.
- b. It makes your heart beat faster than normal.
- c. It helps you keep awake to study.



### Appendix 3.

#### Post-test

#### ENGLISH TEST

**1. Complete the following sentence:**

**(1p.)**

Every time that you have to read, you should adopt the following structure:  
think, preview, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**2. Match with a line, each sentence with the correct word:**

**(1,5 p.)**

**a.** While you are reading, you should \_\_\_\_\_  
beginning

the words that you do not know.

**b.** Before reading, it is important that you  
underline

have a \_\_\_\_\_ reading environment.

**c.** The main topic is usually stated at  
comfortable

the \_\_\_\_\_ of the passage.

**3. Circle the correct answer.**

**(0,5 p.)**

The method of quickly reading which is used to getting only the main ideas  
and a general overview of the content, is called:

**a.** Scanning

**b.** SQ3R

**c.** Skimming

**4. Write the three parts of a reading's structure:**

**(1,5 p.)**



- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Circle the correct answer.

(0,5

p.)

The fast reading method to establish where in a book or article specific information is located is called:

- a. Skimming
- b. Scanning
- c. Analytical reading

6. Which two paragraphs of a text could provide the central ideas?

(1 p.)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_

7. Read the following passage. Then answer the questions below. You have 20 minutes to complete this practice section. Remember to apply reading methods and techniques that you already studied in Unit 1 and Unit 2.

..... \*\*\* .....

Some vocabulary to help you:

**Scanty:** Insufficient, as in extent or degree.

**Sibling:** A person's brother or sister.

**Enduring:** Lasting; continuing; durable.

**Toddlers:** One who toddles, especially a young child learning to walk.

**Encode:** Transfer information from one system of communication into another.



## INFANTILE AMNESIA

<sup>1</sup> What do you remember about your life before you were there? Few people can remember anything that happened to them in their early years. Adults' memories of the next few years also tend to be scanty. Most people remember only a few events –usually ones that were meaningful and distinctive, such as being hospitalized or a sibling's birth.

<sup>2</sup> How might this inability to recall early experiences be explained? The sheer passage of time does not account for it; adults have excellent recognition of pictures of people who attended high school with them 35 years earlier. Another seemingly plausible explanation –that infants do not form enduring memories at this point in development- also is incorrect. Children two and a half to three years old remember experiences that occurred in their first year, and eleven month olds remember some events a year later. Nor does the hypothesis that infantile amnesia reflects repression –or holding back- of sexually charged episodes explain the phenomenon. While such repression may occur, people cannot remember ordinary events from the infant and toddler periods, either.

<sup>3</sup> Three other explanations seem more promising. One involves physiological changes relevant to memory. Maturation of the frontal lobes of the brain continues throughout early childhood, and this part of the brain may be critical for remembering particular episodes in ways that can be retrieved later. Demonstrations of infants' and toddlers' long-term memory have involved their repeating motor activities that they had seen or done earlier, such as reaching in the dark for objects, putting a bottle in a doll's mouth, or pulling apart two pieces of a toy. The brain's level of physiological maturation may support these types of memories, but not those requiring explicit verbal descriptions.

<sup>4</sup> A second explanation involves the influence of the social world on children's language use. Hearing and telling stories about events may help children store information in ways that will endure into later childhood and adulthood. Through hearing stories with a clear beginning, middle, and ending, children may learn to extract the gist of events in ways that they will be able to describe many years later. Consistent with this view, parents and children increasingly engage in discussions of past events when children are about three



years old. However, hearing such stories is not sufficient for younger children to form enduring memories. Telling such stories to two years olds does not seem to produce long-lasting verbalizable memories.

<sup>5</sup> A third likely explanation for infantile amnesia involves incompatibilities between the ways in which infants encode information and the ways in which older children and adults retrieve is. Whether people can remember an event depends critically on the fit between the way in which they earlier encoded the information and the way in which they later attempt to retrieve it. The better able the person is to reconstruct the perspective from which the material was encoded, the more likely that recall will be successful.

<sup>6</sup> This view is supported by a variety of factors that can be create mismatches between very Young children's encoding and older children's and adults' retrieval efforts. The world looks very different to a person whose head is only two or three feet above the ground than to one whose head is five or six feet above it. Older children and adults often try to retrieve the names of things they saw, but infants would not have encoded the information verbally. General knowledge of categories of events such as a birthday party or a visit to the doctor's office helps older individuals encode their experiences, but again, infants and toddlers are unlikely to encode many experiences within such knowledge structures.

<sup>7</sup> These three explanations of infantile amnesia are not mutually exclusive; indeed, the support each other. Physiological immaturity may be part of why infants and toddlers do not form extremely enduring memories, even when they hear stories that promote such remembering preschoolers. Hearing the stories may lead preschoolers to encode aspects of events that allow them to form memories they can access as adults. Conversely, improved encoding of what they hear may help them better understand and remember stories and thus make the stories more useful for remembering future events. Thus, all three explanations –physiological maturation, hearing and producing stories about past events, and improved encoding of key aspects of events- seem likely to be involved in overcoming infantile amnesia. (iBT, 2013)

\*\*\*





8. The word “plausible” in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to:  
(0,5 p.)
- Flexible
  - Believable
  - Debatable
9. The word “phenomenon” in the passage is closest in meaning to:  
(0,5 p.)
- Idea
  - Repetition
  - Occurrence
10. All of the following theories about the inability to recall early experiences are mentioned in paragraph 2, EXCEPT:  
(0,5 p.)
- The ability to recall an event decreases as the time after the event increases.
  - People may hold back sexually meaningful memories.
  - Most events in childhood are too ordinary to be worth remembering.
11. According to paragraph 4, what role may storytelling play in forming childhood memories? (0,5 p.)
- It may encourage the physiological maturing of the brain.
  - It may provide an ordered structure that facilitates memory retrieval.
  - It may help preschool children retrieve memories quickly.
12. Complete.  
The three explanations of infantile amnesia are: (1 p.)
- Physiological maturation.
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - Improved encoding of key aspects of events



**13. What is the main idea of the reading? (1 p.)**

---

---



## Appendix 4.

### Validation Instruments

**UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA**  
**FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA, LETRAS Y CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN**  
**MAESTRÍA EN LENGUA INGLESA Y LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA**

**FICHA PARA VALIDACIÓN DE ENCUESTA**

Nombre del validador/a: Antonio Lenin Argudo Garzon Fecha: Febrero 2014

**Objetivo:** El presente instrumento tiene como objetivo validar el instrumento de encuesta destinado a medir el nivel de lectura comprensiva en Inglés con estudiantes de Psicología de la Universidad del Azuay.

**Instrucciones:** Luego de revisar con detenimiento el instrumento de encuesta llene la matriz siguiente de acuerdo con su criterio de experto. Su aporte es muy valioso en el contexto de la investigación que se lleva a cabo.

Ítem	Criterios a evaluar												
	Claridad en la redacción		Presenta coherencia interna		Libre de inducción a respuestas		Lenguaje culturalmente pertinente		Mide la variable de estudio		Se recomienda eliminar o modificar el ítem		
	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	
1.	/		/		/		/		/		/		
2.	/		/		/		/		/		/		
3.	/		/		/		/		/		/		
4.	/		/		/		/		/		/		
5.	/		/		/		/		/		/		
6.	/		/		/		/		/		/		
7.	/		/		/		/		/		/		
8.	/		/		/		/		/		/		
9.	/		/		/		/		/		/		
<b>Criterios generales</b>										Sí	No	Observaciones	
1. El instrumento contiene instrucciones claras y precisas para su llenado.													
2. La escala propuesta para medición es clara y pertinente.													
3. Los ítems permiten el logro del objetivo de investigación													
4. Los ítems están distribuidos en forma lógica y secuencial.													
5. El número de ítems es suficiente para la investigación													
<b>Validez (marque una X en el casillero correspondiente a su criterio)</b>													
Aplicable		X		No aplicable				Aplicable atendiendo a las observaciones					
Validado por: <u>Antonio Lenin Argudo Garzon</u>				Cédula de identidad: <u>0104704457</u>				Fecha: <u>Febrero 2014</u>					
Firma: <u>[Firma]</u>				Teléfono: <u>0992868947</u>				Email: <u>alargudog@ucacuenca.edu.ec</u>					



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**MAESTRÍA EN LENGUA INGLESA Y LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA**

**FICHA PARA VALIDACIÓN DE ENCUESTA**

Nombre del validador/a: Gabriela Estrella González Fecha: Febrero 2014

**Objetivo:** El presente instrumento tiene como objetivo validar el instrumento de encuesta destinado a medir el nivel de lectura comprensiva en Inglés con estudiantes de Psicología de la Universidad del Azuay.

**Instrucciones:** Luego de revisar con detenimiento el instrumento de encuesta llene la matriz siguiente de acuerdo con su criterio de experto. Su aporte es muy valioso en el contexto de la investigación que se lleva a cabo.

Ítem	Criterios a evaluar											
	Claridad en la redacción		Presenta coherencia interna		Libre de inducción a respuestas		Lenguaje culturalmente pertinente		Mide la variable de estudio		Se recomienda eliminar o modificar el ítem	
	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No
1.	/		/		/		/		/			/
2.	/		/		/		/		/			/
3.	/		/		/		/		/			/
4.	/		/		/		/		/			/
5.	/		/		/		/		/			/
6.	/		/		/		/		/			/
7.	/		/		/		/		/			/
8.	/		/		/		/		/			/
9.	/		/		/		/		/			/
<b>Criterios generales</b>										Sí	No	Observaciones
1. El instrumento contiene instrucciones claras y precisas para su llenado.										/		
2. La escala propuesta para medición es clara y pertinente.										/		
3. Los ítems permiten el logro del objetivo de investigación										/		
4. Los ítems están distribuidos en forma lógica y secuencial.										/		
5. El número de ítems es suficiente para la investigación										/		
<b>Validez (marque una X en el casillero correspondiente a su criterio)</b>												
Aplicable			X			No aplicable			Aplicable atendiendo a las observaciones			
Validado por: <u>Gabriela Estrella González</u>					Cédula de identidad: <u>0301639351</u>					Fecha: <u>Febrero 2014</u>		
Firma: 					Teléfono: <u>0984733935</u>					Email: <u>gabriel.estrella@ucuenca.edu.ec</u>		



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**MAESTRÍA EN LENGUA INGLESA Y LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA**

**FICHA PARA VALIDACIÓN DEL PRE-TEST**

Nombre del validador/a: Gabriela Estrella González Fecha: Febrero 2014

**Objetivo:** El presente instrumento tiene como objetivo validar el instrumento de Pre Test destinado a medir el nivel de lectura comprensiva en Inglés con estudiantes de Psicología de la Universidad del Azuay.

**Instrucciones:** Luego de revisar con detenimiento el instrumento de Pre-Test llene la matriz siguiente de acuerdo con su criterio de experto. Su aporte es muy valioso en el contexto de la investigación que se lleva a cabo.

Ítem	Criterios a evaluar											
	Claridad en la redacción		Presenta coherencia interna		Libre de inducción a respuestas		Lenguaje culturalmente pertinente		Mide la variable de estudio		Se recomienda eliminar o modificar el ítem	
	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No
1.	/		/		/		/		/			/
2.	/		/		/		/		/			/
3.	/		/		/		/		/			/
4.	/		/		/		/		/			/
5.	/		/		/		/		/			/
6.	/		/		/		/		/			/
<b>Criterios generales</b>										Sí	No	Observaciones
1. El instrumento contiene instrucciones claras y precisas para su llenado.										/		
2. La escala propuesta para medición es clara y pertinente.										/		
3. Los ítems permiten el logro del objetivo de investigación										/		
4. Los ítems están distribuidos en forma lógica y secuencial.										/		
5. El número de ítems es suficiente para la investigación										/		
<b>Validez (marque una X en el casillero correspondiente a su criterio)</b>												
Aplicable			X		No aplicable			Aplicable atendiendo a las observaciones				
Validado por: <u>Gabriela Estrella González</u>					Cédula de identidad: <u>0301634451</u>					Fecha: <u>Febrero 2014</u>		
Firma: 					Teléfono: <u>0984733455</u>					Email: <u>gabriela.estrella@ucaa.edu.ec</u>		





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**MAESTRÍA EN LENGUA INGLESA Y LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA**

**FICHA PARA VALIDACIÓN DEL PRE-TEST**

Nombre del validador/a: Antonio Lenin Argudo Guezo Fecha: Febrero 2014

**Objetivo:** El presente instrumento tiene como objetivo validar el instrumento de Pre Test destinado a medir el nivel de lectura comprensiva en Inglés con estudiantes de Psicología de la Universidad del Azuay.

**Instrucciones:** Luego de revisar con detenimiento el instrumento de Pre-Test llene la matriz siguiente de acuerdo con su criterio de experto. Su aporte es muy valioso en el contexto de la investigación que se lleva a cabo.

Ítem	Criterios a evaluar											
	Claridad en la redacción		Presenta coherencia interna		Libre de inducción a respuestas		Lenguaje culturalmente pertinente		Mide la variable de estudio		Se recomienda eliminar o modificar el ítem	
	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No
1.	/		/		/		/		/			/
2.	/		/		/		/		/			/
3.	/		/		/		/		/			/
4.	/		/		/		/		/			/
5.	/		/		/		/		/			/
6.	/		/		/		/		/			/
<b>Criterios generales</b>										Sí	No	Observaciones
1. El instrumento contiene instrucciones claras y precisas para su llenado.										/		
2. La escala propuesta para medición es clara y pertinente.										/		
3. Los ítems permiten el logro del objetivo de investigación										/		
4. Los ítems están distribuidos en forma lógica y secuencial.										/		
5. El número de ítems es suficiente para la investigación										/		
<b>Validez (marque una X en el casillero correspondiente a su criterio)</b>												
Aplicable			X			No aplicable			Aplicable atendiendo a las observaciones			
Validado por: <u>Antonio Lenin Argudo Guezo</u>					Cédula de identidad: <u>01047011457</u>					Fecha: <u>Febrero 2014</u>		
Firma: 					Teléfono: <u>0592868947</u>					Email: <u>alargudo@ucacue.edu.ec</u>		



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**MAESTRÍA EN LENGUA INGLESA Y LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA**

**FICHA PARA VALIDACIÓN DEL POST-TEST**

Nombre del validador/a: Antonio Lenin Argudo Garzon Fecha: Febrero 2014

**Objetivo:** El presente instrumento tiene como objetivo validar el instrumento de Post Test destinado a medir el nivel de lectura comprensiva en Inglés con estudiantes de Psicología de la Universidad del Azuay.

**Instrucciones:** Luego de revisar con detenimiento el instrumento de Post-Test llene la matriz siguiente de acuerdo con su criterio de experto. Su aporte es muy valioso en el contexto de la investigación que se lleva a cabo.

Ítem	Criterios a evaluar											
	Claridad en la redacción		Presenta coherencia interna		Libre de inducción a respuestas		Lenguaje culturalmente pertinente		Mide la variable de estudio		Se recomienda eliminar o modificar el ítem	
	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No
1.	/		/		/		/		/			/
2.	/		/		/		/		/			/
3.	/		/		/		/		/			/
4.	/		/		/		/		/			/
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9.	/		/		/		/		/			/
10.	/		/		/		/		/			/
11.	/		/		/		/		/			/
12.	/		/		/		/		/			/
13.	/		/		/		/		/			/
<b>Criterios generales</b>										Sí	No	Observaciones
1. El instrumento contiene instrucciones claras y precisas para su llenado.										/		
2. La escala propuesta para medición es clara y pertinente.										/		
3. Los ítems permiten el logro del objetivo de investigación										/		
4. Los ítems están distribuidos en forma lógica y secuencial.										/		
5. El número de ítems es suficiente para la investigación										/		
<b>Validez (marque una X en el casillero correspondiente a su criterio)</b>												
Aplicable			X			No aplicable			Aplicable atendiendo a las observaciones			
Validado por: <u>Antonio Lenin Argudo Garzon</u>					Cédula de identidad: <u>0104704457</u>					Fecha: <u>Febrero 2014</u>		
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MAESTRÍA EN LENGUA INGLESA Y LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA

FICHA PARA VALIDACIÓN DEL POST-TEST

Nombre del validador/a: Gabriela Estrella GARCÍA Fecha: Febrero 2014

**Objetivo:** El presente instrumento tiene como objetivo validar el instrumento de Post Test destinado a medir el nivel de lectura comprensiva en Inglés con estudiantes de Psicología de la Universidad del Azuay.

**Instrucciones:** Luego de revisar con detenimiento el instrumento de Post-Test llene la matriz siguiente de acuerdo con su criterio de experto. Su aporte es muy valioso en el contexto de la investigación que se lleva a cabo.

Ítem	Criterios a evaluar											
	Claridad en la redacción		Presenta coherencia interna		Libre de inducción a respuestas		Lenguaje culturalmente pertinente		Mide la variable de estudio		Se recomienda eliminar o modificar el ítem	
	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No	Sí	No
1.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
2.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
3.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
4.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
5.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
6.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
7.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
8.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
9.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
10.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
11.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
12.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
13.	/		/		/		/		/		/	
<b>Criterios generales</b>										Sí	No	Observaciones
1. El instrumento contiene instrucciones claras y precisas para su llenado.										/		
2. La escala propuesta para medición es clara y pertinente.										/		
3. Los ítems permiten el logro del objetivo de investigación										/		
4. Los ítems están distribuidos en forma lógica y secuencial.										/		
5. El número de ítems es suficiente para la investigación										/		
<b>Validez (marque una X en el casillero correspondiente a su criterio)</b>												
Aplicable			X			No aplicable			Aplicable atendiendo a las observaciones			
Validado por: <u>Gabriela Estrella GARCÍA</u>						Cédula de identidad: <u>0301639351</u>				Fecha: <u>Febrero 2014</u>		
Firma: <u>[Firma]</u>						Teléfono: <u>0984733935</u>				Email: <u>gabriela.estrella@ucuenca.edu.ec</u>		





## Appendix 5.

### Photos

